

THE

PULPIT COMMENTARY,

EDITED BY THE

REV. CANON H. D. M. SPENCE, M.A.,

VICAR AND RURAL DEAN OF ST. PANCRAS, AND EXAMINING CHAPLAIN TO THE LORD
BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL;

AND BY THE

REV. JOSEPH S. EXELL.

WITH

INTRODUCTIONS

BY THE

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I. THESSALONIANS.

Exposition and Homiletics:

By REV. P. J. GLOAG, D.D.

Homilies by Various Authors:

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THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS.

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE EPISTLE.

THERE is no doubt that the author of this First Epistle to the Thessalonians is the Apostle Paul. This is one of those scriptural writings the genuineness of which has been almost universally acknowledged. It has been called in question only by theologians of the most extreme school of criticism,¹ and has even been admitted by some belonging to that school.² The external evidence in its favour is strong. It is indirectly alluded to by the apostolic Fathers; it is directly referred to by such early Fathers as Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian; it is contained in the Muratorian Canon, and in the early Syriac and Latin versions belonging to the second century; and its genuineness has never been challenged until recent times. To quote only one of these Fathers; Irenæus (A.D. 179) thus writes: "And on account of this the apostle, explaining himself, has set forth the perfect man of salvation, saying thus in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians: 'And may the God of peace sanctify you wholly, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved without complaint until the advent of the Lord Jesus Christ'" ('Adv. Hæres.' v. 6, 1). Nor is the internal evidence less strong than the external. The character of Paul is distinctly impressed upon this Epistle; his intense love for his converts, his anxiety about their spiritual welfare, his joy when he receives a favourable account of their faith and charity, his zeal for the cause of the Lord for which he is ready to sacrifice everything, his noble independence of spirit,—all these characteristics of the apostle are seen in this Epistle. So also the style and mode of expression are Paul's. We have the same employment of emphatic terms, the same rich use of synonyms, the same

¹ See author's 'Pauline Epistles,' pp. 79—106.

² Baur and the Tübingen school; Hilgenfeld, however, asserts its genuineness.

accumulation of ideas, the same digressions suggested by a word, the same preference for participial constructions as are elsewhere found in Paul's other Epistles. In short, as Professor Jowett observes, "It has been objected against the genuineness of this Epistle that it contains only a single statement of doctrine. But liveliness, personality, similar traits of disposition, are more difficult to invent than statements of doctrine. A later age might have supplied these, but it could hardly have caught the very likeness and portrait of the apostle. . . . Such intricate similarities of language, such lively traits of character, it is not within the power of any forger to invent, and, least of all, a forger of the second century."¹ Nor is there anything in the contents of the Epistle at variance with the opinion that it was written by Paul. It has, indeed, been asserted that it is devoid of individuality and doctrinal statements. Its perusal will show that it is at once lively and specially adapted to the wants of the Thessalonians. And that it is devoid of doctrinal statements is an assertion which may also well be disputed; but even admitting that there is a partial truth in the remark, yet this is easily accounted for by the circumstances under which the Epistle was written.

The coincidences between the Epistle and the incidents in the life of Paul, as recorded in the Acts, is another striking proof of its authenticity.² In the Acts we read of the persecution to which Paul and Silas were subjected at Philippi, when, in violation of their rights as Roman citizens, they were publicly scourged and cast into prison. In the Epistle, written in the name of Paul and Silas, there is reference to this shameful treatment: "Even after we had suffered before and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention" (ch. ii. 2). In the Acts we are informed that Paul and Silas encountered a similar persecution at Thessalonica. "The Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people" (Acts xvii. 5). In the Epistle Paul appeals to the knowledge of the Thessalonians concerning this treatment: "For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know" (ch. iii. 4). In the Acts we are informed that Paul parted from his companions, Silas and Timothy, at Berea, and was rejoined by them at Corinth: "And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia (to Corinth), Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ" (Acts xviii. 5). And the Epistle, written, as we shall afterwards see, from Corinth, is in the joint names of Paul and Silvanus and Timotheus. Not only are there these coincidences, but also additional statements in the Epistle supplementing the history, thus proving that the one record could

¹ Jowett's 'St. Paul's Epistles,' vol. i. pp. 24—26 1st edit., pp. 28, 29 2nd edit.

² Paley's 'Horæ Paulinæ:' on 1 Thessalonians.

not have been copied from the other. Thus in the Acts we are informed that Silas and Timothy did not join Paul until after his arrival at Corinth (Acts xviii. 5); whereas in the Epistle there is a statement which has led many¹ to affirm that Timothy joined Paul at Athens, and was sent by him from that city to Thessalonica: "Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone; and sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellow-labourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith" (ch. iii. 1, 2). In the Acts we are informed that Paul preached in the synagogue for three sabbaths, reasoning with the Jews (Acts xvii. 2); whereas there are references in the Epistle which have induced some to think that his residence in Thessalonica was more protracted. In the Acts we are only informed that Paul preached in the synagogue to the Jews and devout Greeks, that is, the religious proselytes; whereas it is evident from the whole character of the Epistle that the Church was composed of Gentile converts. These differences are not contradictions, and may easily be adjusted; but they are apparent enough to demonstrate the independence both of the history and the Epistle.

§ 2. THE CHURCH OF THESSALONICA.

Thessalonica was a large seaport of Macedonia, situated in the form of an amphitheatre on the slope of a hill at the north-east end of the Thermaic Gulf, now called the Gulf of Salonica. It had in antiquity various names. Thus it was called Emathia and Halia. In ancient history it appears under the name Therma, so called from the hot springs in the neighbourhood. Under this name it is mentioned in the account of the invasion of Xerxes, and in the history of the Peloponnesian War. We are informed that Cassander, the son of Antipater, King of Macedonia, rebuilt Therma, and called it Thessalonica, after the name of his wife, the half-sister of Alexander the Great (Strabo, vii. Frag. 24). According to another account, less trustworthy, it was so called by Philip, the father of Alexander, to commemorate his victory over the Thessalonians. In the Middle Ages it appears under the contracted form Salneck; and is now known under the name Salonica. Under the Romans Thessalonica became a city of great importance. During the temporary division of Macedonia into four districts, it was the capital of the second district; and afterwards, when the Roman province of Macedonia was formed, it became the metropolis of the country, and the residence of the Roman governor. In the civil wars it sided with Augustus and Antony, and was rewarded by receiving the privileges of a free city. Strabo, who lived shortly before the Christian era, observes that "it has at present the largest population of any town in the district" (Strabo vii. 7, 4). In the time of Paul, then, Thessalonica was a populous and flourishing town; it was chiefly inhabited by Greeks, with

¹ So Paley, Bleek, Neander, Jowett, and Ellicott.

a mixture of Romans. The Jews also were attracted to it in great numbers for the sake of commerce, and here was the synagogue of the district (Acts xvii. 1). It has always been a city of great importance. It long continued to be a bulwark against the assaults of the northern barbarians, and afterwards of the Saracens. When the Greek empire became enfeebled, Thessalonica was attached to the Venetian Republic, and remained so until the year 1430, when it was captured by the Turks, in whose possession it continues to this day. It is considered as the second city of European Turkey, having a population of about seventy thousand, of whom at least thirty thousand are Jews. Thessalonica has many remains of antiquity, one of which deserves special mention, a triumphal arch, erected to commemorate the victory of Philippi, and which must have been standing when Paul visited that city.

We have an account of the origin of the Church of Thessalonica in the Acts of the Apostles. In his second great missionary journey, Paul and his fellow-labourers, Silas and Timothy, had arrived at Alexandria Troas, when he was directed by a vision to cross over the Ægean Sea and repair to Europe. In obedience to this Divine direction, we are informed that loosing from Troas, they came with a straight course to the island of Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis, and from that they journeyed inland to Philippi (Acts xvi. 11, 12). Here they remained for some time, preaching the gospel with great success, until they were driven from it by a severe persecution. From Philippi Paul and his companions proceeded, by way of Amphipolis and Apollonia, to Thessalonica. Here was the chief synagogue of the district, and into it Paul, according to his custom, entered and preached the gospel. He proved to the Jews from their Scriptures that the Messiah was to suffer and rise from the dead; and he showed them that Jesus did thus suffer and rise again, and was consequently the Messiah (Acts xvii. 3). It would also appear that at Thessalonica he dwelt much on the kingdom and second advent of the Lord Jesus Christ; he laid great stress on the resurrection of Christ, and on his exaltation to the throne of eternal majesty. Hence the accusation brought against him that he proclaimed another King, one Jesus (Acts xvii. 7); and, in his Epistle, he observes, "Ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, that you would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory" (ch. ii. 11, 12). For three sabbaths Paul continued his efforts in the Jewish synagogue with considerable success; some of the Jews believed, but his converts were especially numerous among the devout Greeks (Acts xvii. 1—4). At length the unbelieving Jews, moved with envy, raised a tumult against Paul and his companions; they stirred up the rabble, and assaulted the house of Jason, with whom the Christian preachers lodged; and when they failed to capture them, they dragged Jason and certain of the converts before the magistrates of the city, accusing them of disturbing the public peace and of harbouring traitors to the emperor. In consequence

of this, to avoid further disturbance, Paul and Silas left the city by night, and repaired to the neighbouring town of Berea (Acts xvii. 10).

In the Acts of the Apostles a residence in Thessalonica of only three weeks is mentioned (Acts xvii. 2). There are, however, statements in the Epistle which would lead us to infer that his residence was for a somewhat longer period. A flourishing Church was formed in Thessalonica; the gospel spread from it as a centre throughout Macedonia; its fame was everywhere diffused; and for this success a longer space of time than three weeks would appear requisite. Besides, at Thessalonica Paul supported himself by manual labour. "Ye remember," he writes, "our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God" (ch. ii. 9). And it was his custom to do so only when his residence in any city was prolonged. And we are informed in the Epistle to the Philippians that his converts in Philippi "sent to Thessalonica once and again to his necessities;" and that this was on the occasion of this visit to Thessalonica is evident, for the apostle tells us that it was "in the beginning of the gospel" (Phil. iv. 15, 16). Now, the distance between these two cities was a hundred miles; and therefore more than three weeks appear to be necessary for the transmission of this twofold supply for his wants. Still, however, his residence could not have been long, and his departure from the city was compulsory. Probably Paul preached for three successive sabbaths in the synagogue, but, finding the Jews obstinate and the synagogue closed against him, he turned, as his manner was, to the Gentiles; and it was his success among the Gentiles that stirred up the wrath of the Jews, and excited that disturbance which was the occasion of his leaving Thessalonica.

The result of Paul's ministry during the three sabbaths he preached in the synagogue is thus given by the author of the Acts: "And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few" (Acts xvii. 4). From this it appears that his success was small among the Jews, but great among the devout Greeks, that is, those Greeks who had previously detached themselves from idolatry and were seeking after God, and were thus in a manner prepared for the reception of Christianity. Afterwards it is probable that Paul preached to the Gentiles, and made numerous converts among them. Although the Jews were numerous in Thessalonica, yet it is evident from the two Epistles that the Church there was chiefly composed of Gentile converts. They are described as those who turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God (ch. i. 9)—a description applicable to converted Gentiles, but not to converted Jews and Jewish proselytes; and in neither Epistle is there a direct quotation from the Old Testament, the only probable allusion being to the prophecies of Daniel in the description of the man of sin contained in the Second Epistle (2 Thess. ii. 4).



§ 3. THE OCCASION OF THE EPISTLE.

Paul, driven from Thessalonica, had repaired to Berea, but from this also he had been compelled to depart by the machinations of the Jews of Thessalonica (Acts xvii. 13, 14). He had learned that the persecution which had arisen during his presence was continued in his absence (ch. ii. 14). And hence he was filled with anxiety about his Thessalonian converts. He knew that by reason of the shortness of his residence they were only partially instructed in Christianity, and he naturally feared that they might fall from the faith. Twice he had planned to visit them; but circumstances had prevented him (ch. ii. 18). Accordingly, no longer able to master his anxiety, he sent his fellow-labourer Timothy, either from Berea or Athens, to ascertain their state (ch. iii. 1, 2). Paul, meanwhile, had repaired from Berea to Athens, and thence to Corinth; and there Timothy joined him, and the information which he brought was the occasion of this Epistle. That information was upon the whole consolatory and satisfactory. Timothy brought good tidings of the faith and charity of the Thessalonians, of their affectionate regard for the apostle, and of their earnest desire to see him. The Thessalonians, in spite of the persecution which they endured, continued steadfast to the faith; they were examples to all that believed in Thessalonica and Achaia (ch. i. 7; iii. 6, 7). But, however favourable this report of Timothy, there were still many defects to supply, many errors to correct, and many evil practices to reform. The religious knowledge of the Thessalonians was defective; their religion had partially degenerated into fanaticism; and especially they were filled with excitement under the persuasion of the immediate coming of Christ. Some of them had neglected their worldly duties and had sunk into an indolent inactivity (ch. iv. 11, 12). It would appear that some of the converts had died, and their friends were distressed on their account, lest they should forfeit the blessings to be bestowed at the advent of Christ (ch. iv. 13). Nor had the Thessalonians entirely detached themselves from the vices of their former heathen state. The apostle had to warn them against sensuality, that vice so prevalent among the Gentiles; and he had to rebuke the covetousness of some as well as the indolence of others (ch. iv. 1—7).

With regard to its contents, the Epistle is divided into two parts: the first, comprehending the first three chapters, may be termed historical; the second, including the two last chapters, is practical. The apostle, after saluting the Thessalonians, renders thanks to God for the entrance of the gospel among them, for the mighty efficacy with which it was accompanied, and for the steadfastness of their faith (ch. i.). He alludes to his demeanour when in Thessalonica; how, notwithstanding his shameful treatment at Philippi, he had preached the gospel among them amid much contention; how he had sought neither their money nor their applause, but,

actuated by the purest motives, had laboured incessantly for their spiritual welfare, and was ready to sacrifice himself for them (ch. ii.). He mentions the extreme anxiety he had on their account, the mission of Timothy to them, and the great satisfaction he experienced at the information which Timothy brought of the steadfastness of their faith and the abundance of their charity (ch. iii.). He then exhorts them to continue in holiness, carefully to avoid the lusts of the Gentiles who knew not God, and, instead of being led away by excitement as if the advent of Christ was at hand, to be diligent in the performance of their earthly duties. He comforts them concerning the fate of their departed friends, and exhorts them to be watchful and prepared for the coming of the Lord (ch. iv.). Then follow a series of detached exhortations to cultivate the virtues of Christianity, and the Epistle concludes with the apostolic benediction (ch. v.).

§ 4. THE DATE OF THE EPISTLE.

When Paul and Silas left Thessalonica, they came to Berea; Timothy probably remained behind, but he also soon joined them. Paul left them both at Berea, and proceeded alone to Athens. Timothy was probably sent from Berea back to Thessalonica to confirm the Church there, though some suppose that this mission took place from Athens. At Athens Paul intended to remain until his companions joined him; he sent a message to Silas and Timothy to come to him with all speed (Acts xvii. 14, 15). It would, however, appear that he left Athens without them; unforeseen circumstances had prevented them complying with his request, and they did not rejoin him until his arrival at Corinth. Now, as the Epistle is written in the joint names of Paul, Silvanus, and Timotheus, it is evident that it was not composed until all three met together at Corinth. Some time also must have elapsed between the planting of Christianity in Thessalonica and the writing of this Epistle. Paul had twice attempted to visit them; Timothy had been sent by the apostle and had returned from his mission; and the faith of the Thessalonians had been spread abroad throughout Macedonia and Achaia (ch. i. 7, 8). The interval, however, could not have been long. Timothy returned at the commencement of Paul's residence at Corinth; and the apostle's anxiety for the Thessalonians would induce him to write the Epistle immediately on his receiving the information. He speaks of his absence from them as having as yet lasted only a short time. "We, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire" (ch. ii. 17). We may, therefore, safely fix the time of the composition of the Epistle toward the close of the year 52 or the beginning of the year 53, and during the early part of Paul's residence at Corinth, about six months after the planting of Christianity in Thessalonica.

Accordingly the place of writing was Corinth. In our New Testament,

at the end of the Epistle, there is appended the note: "The First Epistle to the Thessalonians was written from Athens." Though such a note is found in the most ancient manuscripts, it is evidently a mistake. The Epistle could not have been written from Athens, for Silas and Timothy were not both there with the apostle; and it was not written until the return of Timothy from Thessalonica, which occurred at Corinth; nor is there any ground for the supposition that Paul and his companions, during his residence at Corinth, made a short excursion to Athens. The mistake appears to have arisen from a careless inference drawn from the words, "We thought it good to be left at Athens alone" (ch. iii. 1); whereas the reference there is evidently to a past event, and indirectly implies that the apostle was not at Athens when he wrote these words. These subscriptions at the end of the Epistles have no authority; and although in general correct, yet occasionally, as in the present instance, they are erroneous.

§ 5. THE PECULIARITIES OF THE EPISTLE.

The special peculiarity of this Epistle is that it is undoubtedly the first of Paul's extant Epistles. Whether it is the first Epistle that Paul ever wrote is an entirely different question; but it is the first that has come down to us. This is a point on which almost all commentators are agreed. In all probability it is the earliest of the books of the New Testament, with the possible exception of the Epistle of James.

It is erroneous to affirm that this First Epistle to the Thessalonians is devoid of doctrinal statements. The supreme dignity of the Lord Jesus Christ, the spiritual kingdom which he has established in this world, the deliverance from the wrath to come effected by him, the necessity of holiness for salvation, the reign of Christ in heaven, the resurrection of the just, the second advent of Christ, the blessedness of a future state to the righteous and the wrath which awaits the wicked, are all clearly deduced from this Epistle. The great plan of redemption through the sufferings of Christ was clear to the apostle from the beginning. We can hardly even affirm that there was a development in the views of the apostle—a progress made in spiritual knowledge and insight into the ways of God. No doubt different doctrines are insisted on in the different Epistles; but this arose from the circumstances of the Churches to whom the apostle wrote. Thus in this Epistle to the Thessalonians there is no mention of the great Pauline doctrine of justification, because in that Church there was no controversy with the Judaistic Christians, and therefore no necessity of defending the doctrine of justification against erroneous notions; whereas the errors of the Galatian Church caused the apostle to dwell specially on that doctrine. So also at a still later period the incipient Gnostic errors were the occasion which induced the apostle to insist more fully on the nature of Christ's Person in the Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians.

than in his earlier Epistles. Bishop Lightfoot, in his able article on the "Epistles to the Thessalonians," in Smith's 'Biblical Dictionary,' notices three points of difference between these and Paul's later Epistles. First, in the general style of these earlier letters there is greater simplicity and less exuberance of language. Secondly, the antagonism is different. Here the opposition comes from the unconverted Jews; afterwards Paul's opponents are Judaizing Christians. Thirdly, the doctrinal teaching of the apostle does not bear quite the same aspect as in the later Epistles. Many of the distinctive doctrines of Christianity which are inseparably connected with Paul's name were not evolved and distinctly enunciated until the needs of the Church drew them out into prominence at a later date. So far, then, it may be true that this First Epistle to the Thessalonians is not so doctrinal as the Epistles to the Romans, Galatians, and Ephesians. The circumstances of the Church determined the contents of the Epistle. The doctrine most insisted on and explained is the second advent, because erroneous views prevailed concerning it among the Thessalonians, giving rise to many disorders.

Paul, in writing to the Thessalonians, lays bare his heart; he speaks of his gentleness among them, even as a nursing mother cherisheth her children, and of his readiness to impart unto them, not the gospel of God only, but his own soul by reason of the affection which he bore to them. The Epistle which it most closely resembles is that to the Philippians. The Macedonian Churches were peculiarly attached to the apostle, and he to them; he writes to them in the fulness of his affection; and exhorts them, not so much with the authority of a spiritual teacher, as with the love and tenderness of parental affection, even as a father doth his children.

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THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS.

EXPOSITION.

CHAPTER I.

CONTENTS.—Paul, after the address and salutation, testifies that he renders constant thanks to God for the Thessalonians, calling to remembrance their faith, love, and hope, being assured of their election. He expresses his joy in their cordial reception of the gospel and the Christian character which they exhibited, being examples to all believers in Macedonia and Achaia. He mentions the favourable report which he had of their conversion to God from idols, and of their waiting for the advent of Christ.

Ver. 1.—Paul. He does not call himself “an apostle,” not because the Thessalonians were newly converted (Chrysostom), or from tenderness to Silvanus who was not an apostle (Estius), or because his apostolic authority was not yet recognized (Jowett), or because he had merely commenced his apostolic labours (Wordsworth); but because his apostleship had never been called in question by the Thessalonians. For the same reason he omits this title in the Epistle to the Philippians; whereas he strongly insists upon it in his Epistles to the Corinthians and Galatians, because among them there were many opposed to his authority. **And Silvanus.** The same as the Silas of the Acts. He is mentioned as a chief man among the brethren, and a prophet or inspired teacher (Acts xv. 22, 32). His Latin name renders it probable that he was a Hellenistic Jew, and, like Paul, he was a Roman citizen (Acts xvi. 37). He was sent with Judas Barsabas from Jerusalem, to convey the apostolic decrees to Antioch; and he accompanied Paul instead of Barsabas on his second missionary journey

(Acts xv. 40). He suffered imprisonment with Paul at Philippi; and was engaged with him in preaching the gospel in Thessalonica, Berea, and Corinth. His ministry at Corinth is honourably mentioned by Paul in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians (2 Cor. i. 9). After this there is no more mention of Silvanus in the Acts, and it is doubtful whether he was the Silvanus by whom the First Epistle of Peter was conveyed to the Churches of Asia (1 Pet. v. 12).¹ Ancient tradition, erroneously supposing that Silas and Silvanus were different persons, makes Silas the Bishop of Corinth, and Silvanus the Bishop of Thessalonica. **And Timotheus.** The well-known disciple of Paul. He was a native of Lystra, having a Greek father and a Jewish mother (Acts xvi. 1). He joined Paul and Silas on their second missionary journey at Lystra, and was with them in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Corinth. He was with Paul on his third missionary journey, and was sent by him on a mission to Macedonia and Corinth (Acts xix. 22; 1 Cor. xvi. 10), and accompanied him into Asia on his last journey to Jerusalem (Acts xx. 4). He was also with Paul during his first Roman imprisonment, when he wrote the Epistles to the Philippians and Colossians (Phil. i. 1; Col. i. 1). Afterwards he resided at Ephesus (1 Tim. i. 3); from which he was recalled to Rome by Paul shortly before his martyrdom (2 Tim. iv. 21). The last mention of Timothy is in the Epistle to the Hebrews: “Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you” (Heb. xiii. 23). According to ecclesiastical tradition, he became Bishop of Ephesus, and there suffered martyrdom.

¹ Some, on insufficient reasons, identify Silas with Tertius (Rom. xvi. 22), and others with Luke.

Silvanus and Timotheus are associated with Paul in his address to the Thessalonians, not to give weight and authority to his Epistle, but because they assisted him in the planting of the Church at Thessalonica, and were now with him at Corinth, when he was writing this Epistle. Silvanus is placed first, because he was the older and had been longer with the apostle, and, as is evident from the Acts, was at this time the more important of the two (Acts xvi. 19; xvii. 4). By being included in the address, they are represented as joint authors of the Epistle with Paul, although they were only so in name. It is possible that Paul employed one of them as his amanuensis in writing the Epistle. **Unto the Church.** The word "Church" denotes a select assembly; here, Christians selected from the world. It does not denote in the New Testament, as with us, a building, but the congregation. In Paul's later Epistles, those addressed are called, not the Church, but saints. **Of the Thessalonians.** In other Epistles the address is to the city, as Rome, Philippi, Colosse; here it is to the inhabitants. The Church of the Thessalonians was chiefly composed of converted Gentiles, with a small number of converted Jews (see Introduction). *Which is;* to be omitted, as not being in the original. **In God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ.** The characteristic peculiarity of the Church: they are in God and Christ, that is, in fellowship with them, united to them. "In God the Father" characterizes them as not being heathens; "in the Lord Jesus Christ" characterizes them as not being Jews. **Grace be unto you, and peace.** The usual apostolic benediction. "Grace" is the Greek and "peace" is the Jewish form of salutation. The Greeks commenced their epistles with wishing grace for those to whom they wrote; and the usual form of salutation among the Jews was *Shalom* or "peace;" the apostle combines them, thus intimating that both Greeks and Jews are one in Christ Jesus. In the Pastoral Epistles and in the Second Epistle of John the form is "Grace, mercy, and peace" (2 John 3), and in the Epistle of Jude it is "Mercy, peace, and love" (Jude 2). **From God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.** These words are wanting in some important manuscripts, and are omitted in the R.V. The preponderance, however, of external authority is in their favour.

Ver. 2.—We. Many expositors (Conybeare, Koch, Jowett) suppose that the plural is here used for the singular; as Paul elsewhere does in other parts of this Epistle. Thus: "Wherefore we would come unto you, even I Paul, once and again" (ch. ii. 18); "Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left

at Athens alone" (ch. iii. 1). In these verses the pronoun "we" is evidently restricted to Paul. Still, however, Silvanus and Timotheus being mentioned directly before, it is most natural to include them here. **Give thanks to God always for you all.** All Paul's Epistles, with the solitary exception of the Epistle to the Galatians, commence with an expression of thanksgiving. **Making mention of you in our prayers;** whilst we are engaged in prayer for you. Paul's prayer for the Thessalonians took the form of thanksgiving.

Ver. 3.—Remembering without ceasing. Some attach the words, "without ceasing," or "unceasingly," to the previous clause; "making mention of you unceasingly in our prayers" (so Alford). **Your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope.** These expressions are not to be weakened, as if they were a mere Hebraism for active faith, laborious love, and patient hope. We have here the three cardinal virtues—faith, love, and hope (1 Cor. xiii. 13). Elsewhere these graces are combined. Thus again in this Epistle: "Putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation" (ch. v. 8); and in the Epistle to the Colossians: "Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all saints, for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven" (Col. i. 4, 5). By the "work of faith" is not meant faith itself as the work of God (John vi. 29), but that faith which is energetic, which is active and living, productive of good works. By the "labour, or toil, of love" is not meant that love which is devoted to God, but that love which manifests itself in acts of kindness toward our fellow-Christians and toward the human race. And by the "patience of hope" is meant that constancy which remains unconquered by trials and persecutions. There is a climax here; faith manifests itself by its works—its active exertion; love by its toils—its works of self-denial; and hope by its patience—its endurance amid trials and discouragements. "Remembering, the apostle would say, your faith, hope, and love: a faith that had its outward effect on your lives; a love that spent itself in the service of others; and a hope that was no mere transient feeling, but was content to wait for the things unseen, when Christ should be revealed" (Jowett). **In our Lord Jesus Christ.** These words do not refer to all three virtues (Hofmann), but only to the last, specifying its object, namely, that it is hope in the advent of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is hope's highest expectation, because at the advent the kingdom of Christ will come in its glory. **In the sight of (or rather, before) God and**

our Father. These words are to be conjoined with "remembering:" "remembering unceasingly before God and our Father your work of faith," etc. According to the English idiom, the conjunction "and" is dropped—"God our Father."

Ver. 4.—**Knowing**; that is, not the Thessalonians them-selves, but we, Paul and Silvanus and Timotheus; knowing, being well assured of. **Brethren beloved, your election of God**; or rather, as it is in the margin and in the R.V., *Knowing brethren, beloved of God, your election*. By election is meant that act of free grace by which God destines individuals to become believers in Christ. Thus the Thessalonian converts were chosen or elected by God from among their heathen countrymen to become Christians. The ultimate reason of their Christianity was their election of God.

Ver. 5.—**For**; or rather, *how* (R.V.); or, *because*; assigning the reasons for Paul's confidence in their election; and these reasons were two: first, the powerful entrance which the gospel had among them; and secondly, the joyful reception which was given to it by the Thessalonians. **Our gospel**; that is, the gospel which was preached by us. **Came not unto you in word only**. The gospel came in word, for this was a necessary pre-requisite, but "not in word only," that is, it was not a bare publication or communication in human words. **But in power**. Some restrict the epithets which here follow to the teachers, as denoting the mode in which they preached the gospel; but it is better to refer them both to the teachers and the taught. By "power" is not meant miracles, but, in contrast to "word," the power with which Paul and his companions preached, and the impression which the gospel made on the hearers. **And in the Holy Ghost**. Here also the reference is, not to miraculous gifts, but to the influences of the Spirit accompanying the preaching of the gospel; such was the efficacy of Paul's preaching that it proved itself to be accompanied by the operation of the Holy Ghost in the conversion of his hearers. There is here an ascent: the gospel came in power, and, what is more, it came in the Holy Ghost. **And in much assurance**. By "assurance" here is meant the confidence with which Paul and his fellow-workers preached the gospel to the Thessalonians, and the fulness of conviction with which the Thessalonians received it. **As ye know**. An appeal to their knowledge that what he now states is true. **What manner of men we were among you**. Alluding to the blamelessness of their behaviour when in Thessalonica. **For your sake**; namely, that we sought not our own profit or advantage, but your spiritual good.

Ver. 6.—Now follows the second reason assigned by Paul for his confidence in their election. **And ye became followers** (or, *imitators*) **of us, and of the Lord; of Christ**. By becoming imitators of the apostle, they became imitators of Christ. "Be ye followers of me," writes St. Paul to the Corinthians, "even as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor. xi. 1). The point of imitation did not consist in their cordial reception of the gospel, for that could not apply to Christ; but in their joyful endurance of suffering. **Having received the word in much affliction**. We learn from the Acts that the unbelieving Jews stirred up the heathen rabble, and raised a persecution against Paul and his associates, in consequence of which they had to depart from Thessalonica (Acts xvii. 4—10). It would appear that, after the apostle had left the city, the persecution, far from abating, rather increased, and the Gentile inhabitants united with the unbelieving Jews against the Christians; the Thessalonian converts suffered from their own countrymen as well as from the Jews (ch. ii. 14). **With joy of the Holy Ghost**; that is, not merely spiritual joy, or joy in the Holy Ghost, but joy which proceeds from the Holy Ghost—joy which is produced by him, of which he is the Author.

Ver. 7.—**So that ye were ensamples**. The word here rendered "ensamples" literally signifies "types." It is used to denote a form or figure (Acts vii. 43), a model or likeness (Acts vii. 44), a mark or impression (John xx. 25). Hence, in a metaphorical sense, it came to signify an example, a pattern for imitation. "Now these things are our examples" (1 Cor. x. 6). **To all that believe—to all believers—in Macedonia and Achaia**. These are the two provinces into which ancient Greece was divided by the Romans, each of which was governed by a proconsul. Macedonia was the northern portion, including Macedonia proper, Epirus and Illyricum; at first it was divided into four districts, but afterwards united into one province, of which Thessalonica was constituted the capital. Achaia was the southern portion of ancient Greece, including the Peloponnesus, Attica, Boeotia, etc., and, until recently, was nearly of the same dimensions with the modern kingdom of Greece; its capital was Corinth.

Ver. 8.—**For**; or, *because* the proof of this praise conferred on the Thessalonians. **From you sounded out**. Resounded like the sound of a trumpet. Comp. Rom. x. 18, "Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world." **The word of the Lord**. This does not intimate that the Thessalonians by their missionary activity disseminated the gospel, but that from them locally the gospel had spread.

Not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad. There is a slight difficulty in the construction. The sentence is complete without the addition, "your faith to God-ward is spread abroad," and, therefore, we must consider these words as equivalent to "from you sounded out the word of the Lord." When the apostle says that "the faith of the Thessalonians is spread abroad in every place," the meaning is that the report of their joyful reception of the gospel had excited universal attention. There is here a certain use of the figure hyperbole. The words, "in every place," are not to be taken in their full literal sense, but are merely a strong expression for the wide diffusion of the faith of the Thessalonians. Paul uses similar hyperboles in other places, as when he speaks of the faith of the Romans being spoken of throughout the whole world (Rom. i. 8), and of the gospel having come into all the world (Col. i. 6). This wide diffusion of the faith of the Thessalonians, notwithstanding the recent date of their conversion, may be accounted for when we consider that Thessalonica and Corinth were two great commercial cities, from and to which there was a constant coming and going, so that reports might easily be transmitted by merchants and strangers. It has also been suggested that Aquila and Priscilla, who had lately come from Rome (Acts xviii. 2), must in their journey have passed through Thessalonica, and would bring with them to Corinth such a report of the faith of the Thessalonians (Wieseler). So that we need not to speak anything; that is, of your faith, as this is already so well known and applauded.

Ver. 9.—*For they themselves*; that is, the reporters, those in Macedonia, Achaia, and every other place. *Show of us*; or, *report concerning us* (R.V.) in regard to our preaching or entrance among you. Instead of questions being asked of us by them, as would naturally be expected, they of their own accord give information. *What manner of entering in we had among you*. "Entering," here evidently refers, not merely to the outward entrance, the mere preaching of the gospel among the Thessalonians; but to the access, the internal entrance, which the gospel found into their hearts; that is, with

what power and fulness of the Holy Ghost we preached the gospel unto you, and with what joy and confidence and contempt of danger ye received it. *And how ye turned to God from idols*. This, as already remarked, is one of the proofs that the Church of Thessalonica was chiefly composed of Gentile converts, though, of course, not to the exclusion of the Jewish element (Acts xvii. 4). *To serve the living and true God*. Two epithets employed in contrast to the idols of the heathen: "living," in opposition to dead idols, which were nothing in the world; "true," not in the sense of veracious, but of real in opposition to the imaginary gods of the heathen.

Ver. 10.—*And to wait*. The faith of the Thessalonians took the form of hope or expectation for the coming of the Lord; an element of Christian feeling, perhaps, not so prominent in the present day. *For his Son from heaven*; referring to the second advent. Christ on his departure from this world went to heaven, where he resides, making intercession for us, but from thence he will come to judge the quick and the dead. In the primitive Church the advent of Christ was not regarded as at a distance, but as an event which might at any moment occur. *Whom he raised from the dead*; with emphasis placed before "Jesus," because his resurrection from the dead was the open declaration, the public inauguration, of his Divine sonship (Rom. i. 4). *Even Jesus which delivered us*. The participle is present; not past, "who delivered us," namely, by his death; nor future, "who shall deliver us," at the judgment; but present, "who delivers us;" the deliverance is going on—it commenced with his death, but will not be completed until his advent. Or the word may be used as a substantive, "Jesus, our Deliverer." *From the wrath*; or righteous indignation of God; here punishment as the effect of wrath. "The wrath of God is, in its deepest ground, love; love itself becomes a consuming fire to whatever is opposed to the nature of goodness" (Koch). *To come*; literally, *which is coming, the coming wrath*, denoting its absolute certainty. This coming wrath will take place at the advent of Christ, when he appears, not only for the salvation of his people, but for the destruction of his enemies.

HOMILETICS.

Vers. 1, 2.—*The character of Christians*. 1. *They are converted*; they turn to God from idols. As the heathen turned from material idols, so do believers from spiritual idols. A change is effected in their disposition; their chief affection is now fixed on God and Christ; they serve the living and true God. 2. *They wait for the Lord Jesus Christ*; they expect salvation from him, and look forward to his second coming. 3. *They live a holy life*; they possess the three cardinal virtues, and prove that they do so by their outward manifestations.

Ver. 3.—*The three cardinal virtues*: faith, love, and hope. 1. *Their order*. Faith is the commencement of the spiritual life, love its progress and continuance, and hope its completion; faith is the foundation, love the structure, and hope the top-stone of God's spiritual temple in the soul. 2. *Their manifestations*. Faith is seen by its works; love, by its self-denying exertions; and hope, by its patience and endurance. 3. *Their reference to time*. Faith refers to the past, love to the present, and hope to the future.

Ver. 5.—*The entrance of the gospel*. 1. *Negatively*. "Not in word only." The preaching of the gospel will only add to our condemnation if we do not by faith accept it; not nominal, but real Christianity is the chief matter; the entrance must not be external, but internal. 2. *Positively*. "In power," arresting us in our worldly career; "in the Holy Ghost," being the Agent of our conversion; "in much assurance," so that we know from experience its truth and efficacy.

Ver. 6.—*The imitation of Christ*. Christ not only died as a Sacrifice, but lived as an Example. He is the great Example whom we must imitate, the Pattern of the new creation, the Original of which all believers are copies. Especially we must imitate him in his patient endurance of suffering. The cross is ever the Christian's motto; and we can only enter into heaven through tribulation.

Ver. 6.—*The union of affliction with joy*. The Thessalonians "received the word with much affliction and joy of the Holy Ghost." Christianity makes no stoical demands. Spiritual joy does not exclude, but even includes, sorrow. "Sorrowing, yet always rejoicing," is the Christian's condition. To glory in tribulation is the Christian's experience. "In the spiritual world joy and sorrow are not two, but one."

Ver. 7.—*The example of Christians*. It was greatly to the praise of the Thessalonians that they were examples to all believers in Macedonia and Achaia. 1. *Consistent believers are living evidences of the truth of Christianity*. By the purity of their conduct, by their unselfishness, by their patience in suffering, they prove that there is something real and living in Christianity. 2. *Inconsistent believers are obstacles in the way of the gospel*. They confirm the worldly in their worldliness, as if Christianity were a mere pretence, and thus give occasion to the enemies of God to blaspheme.

Ver. 10.—*The expectation of the advent*. Believers are here described as waiting for the Son of God from heaven. Certainty of the fact of the advent; Christ shall come from heaven. Uncertainty of the time of the advent; "Of that day knoweth no man, not even the angels who are in heaven." It would appear that the early Christians believed that Christ might come at any time, even in their days; the first advent, being so recent, excited within them the expectation of the immediateness of the second. Hence the doctrine of the second advent occupied a much more prominent place in the thoughts of the primitive Christians than it does in ours. It was to them a living power; believers then lived in constant expectation of the coming of the Lord; whereas the teaching of the present day has in a measure passed from it; its uncertainty, instead of exciting us to holiness and watchfulness, is too often abused as an encouragement to sloth and security.

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Ver. 1.—*Address and salutation*. At a point almost midway between the apostle's call and his martyrdom he penned this first of his thirteen Epistles, which was, perhaps, the earliest book of New Testament Scripture, and addressed to one of the primary centres of European Christianity.

I. THE AUTHORS OF THE SALUTATION. "Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy." Simply Paul, without official adjunct of any sort, for there was no one in the Thessalonian Church to challenge his apostleship or his relationship to Christ. He associates Silvanus and Timothy with himself in the salutation as they were associated with him in the original foundation of the Church; Silvanus being placed next to himself, because

he was of older standing and greater weight in the Church than Timothy, a comparatively young evangelist.

II. THE CHURCH TO WHICH THE SALUTATION WAS ADDRESSED. "To the Church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." 1. *Its situation.* Thessalonica was the capital of all Macedonia, and is still the second city of European Turkey. Important then as now by its commerce; important by its place on the great road which connected Rome with its Asiatic dependencies; but more important in the eye of the apostle as a grand centre of missionary operations both by land and sea, and with a mingled population of Jews and Gentiles. 2. *Its true character as a Church.* It was "the Church of the Thessalonians"—a regularly organized community of Christians, mostly Gentiles, having the root and ground of its spiritual existence in union with the Father and the Son. They were "in the fellowship of the Father and the Son," because they were "dwelling in God, and God in them," and "they were in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ." The one fellowship implies the other; for Jesus said, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me;" yet it is also true that it is "God who calls us into the fellowship of the Son" (1 Cor. i. 9). This double fellowship is secured by the bond of the Holy Spirit. As enjoyed by the Thessalonians it implied: (1) Their devotion to the truth; for only "as abiding in the doctrine of Christ" they would have "both the Father and the Son" (2 John 9; 1 John ii. 24). There is no fellowship but in the truth. To be in darkness is to be out of fellowship (1 John i. 6). (2) Their unity. "Even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us" (John xvii. 21). (3) Their love to one another. "If we love one another God abideth in us" (1 John iv. 12). (4) Their boldness in the day of judgment (1 John ii. 28). (5) Their ultimate perfection. "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one" (John xvii. 21—23). Behold thus the high dignity and blessed privilege of the Church at Thessalonica.

III. THE SALUTATION. "Grace and peace be unto you." (See homiletical hints on Gal. i. 5; Col. i. 2.)—T. C.

Vers. 2, 3.—*Heartfelt thanksgiving for spiritual prosperity.* The apostle begins by a full and earnest expression of thanksgiving such as is characteristic of all his Epistles except that to the Galatians.

I. THE GROUND OF THANKSGIVING. "Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." We consider here: 1. *The graces of the Christian life.* We have here, in the first Epistle ever written by the apostle, his favourite trilogy of Christian principles. (1) The three graces are fundamental. As the three principal colours of the rainbow—red, yellow, and blue, representing respectively heat, light, and purifying power—supply in their combination all the other colours, so, by a sort of moral analysis, it can be shown that faith, hope, and love lie at the foundation, or enter into the composition, of all other Christian graces whatever. (2) They are three inseparable graces. Faith always works by love, and love is inseparable from hope, for "hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost" (Rom. v. 5). Faith is the necessary root, as hope and love are its unfailing fruits. As faith works by love, it is also the substance of things hoped for. (3) They are at once the defence and the adornment of Christian life. "Let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation" (ch. v. 8). (4) They are the abiding principles of Christian life: "Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three" (1 Cor. xiii. 13). They do not die with death; for in eternity the Church will be made perfect in love, as it will ever continue to trust in the Lord, and hope for new developments of truth and new disclosures of blessedness. 2. *The practical aspect of these graces as forces in the life of the Church.* There is a climax in the exhibition of the three graces. The apostle does not say, "the work of faith, the work of love, the work of hope," but ascends from work to labour, and from labour to endurance. There is a work that is a refreshing exercise of our energies, but it involves no exhaustion or fatigue; but when work has deepened into labour we become conscious of the limitation of our strength, and then we have to call in the new principle of endurance, or "patience," if we are to carry it to a triumphant result. (1) The work of faith points to a work springing out of faith; for faith is the most active of all the principles which

influence human conduct. Their faith was, therefore, a fruitful faith. (2) The labour of love suggests the sacrifices which we are ready to make for the objects of our love. It was not "love in word or in tongue," but "in deed and in truth" (1 John iii. 18). (3) The patience of hope suggests the severity of present afflictions, which are borne with constancy and perseverance because the sufferers are cheered by hope. But it is "hope in our Lord Jesus Christ;" that is, hope of his second advent; for the Thessalonians had a constant and overwhelming sense of the nearness of his coming, which in some cases broke in upon the continuity of their daily duties.

II. THE OCCASION, CIRCUMSTANCES, AND FREQUENCY OF THE APOSTLE'S THANKSGIVING.

"We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers." 1. *It was in his prayers for them that he expressed his thanksgiving.* "Even in the sight of God and our Father." The care of all the Churches was upon him daily (2 Cor. xi. 28), and under such a burden he "bowed his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." It is happy for Christians to be remembered in the prayers of saints, to be borne upon their hearts, to be borne up before God in intercessory prayer (Rom. i. 9; Eph. i. 16). His thanksgivings were as constant as his prayers. 2. *The thanksgivings were addressed to God* because the spiritual prosperity at Thessalonica was due neither to the converts themselves nor to the preachers of the gospel. We must ever speak of the grace of God, and exalt it in our praises. 3. *The thanksgiving was all the more hearty and full because it had regard to the prosperity of the entire community.* "All of you," because they were an eminent seal of his apostleship, a blessed effect of his ministry among them.—T. C.

Vers. 4—6.—*Their election and its fruits another ground of thanksgiving.* The apostle, Jew as he was, addresses these Gentiles as his brethren, and represents them as the objects of Divine love. "Knowing, brethren beloved of God, your election."

I. THERE IS AN ELECTION ACCORDING TO GRACE. 1. *The election referred to here was not an election to external privilege or ecclesiastical relationship;* for that might have had a very uncertain issue, and would not have been the subject of such abounding thankfulness as he expresses in this passage. 2. *It was not even the call to obtain glory, which they had received through his gospel* (2 Thess. ii. 13, 14); for the election only realized itself in that call, Scripture always distinguishing the order of election and calling. "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called" (Rom. viii. 30). 3. *Much less is the election to be identified with regeneration, conversion, or faith.* These were its effects. 4. *It was an election to eternal life, involving all the various processes of his grace.* (Rom. xi. 5.) (1) It is an election in Christ (Eph. i. 4). (2) It is irrespective of merit (Rom. ix. 11). (3) It is through faith and the sanctification of the Spirit (2 Thess. ii. 13). (4) It is to eternal glory (Rom. ix. 23).

II. THE KNOWLEDGE OF THIS ELECTION IS A POSSIBLE AND AN ACTUAL EXPERIENCE. The apostle's knowledge was not derived from special revelation, neither was it the mere credulity of a kindly charity, "hoping all things" in the absence of evidence. It had a double ground—one subjective and the other objective; one based upon the apostle's conscious experience in preaching the gospel, the other upon their practical and hearty reception of the truth. 1. *The subjective evidence.* "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." (1) It did come in word, for it was conveyed to the Thessalonians in human speech, albeit not "in the enticing words of man's wisdom," but it passed beyond the word. It did not merely sound in the ear nor touch the understanding. (2) But it came in power—on the part of the preachers with an overwhelming force and persuasiveness, so that "the faith of the people should not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God" (1 Cor. ii. 5). There was a conscious abounding energy which carried them beyond themselves, with an overmastering conviction that they would prevail. (3) It came also "in the Holy Ghost," or, as the apostle elsewhere phrases it, "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (1 Cor. ii. 4). The Word would otherwise have been a dead letter and a killing letter, but the Spirit gave it life. The power of the gospel, therefore, was due to the efficient operation of the Spirit. (4) It came also "in much assurance," not on the part of the Thessalonians, but on the part of the preachers of the gospel, who were fully convinced of its truth, and had thorough confidence in its power. (5) This subjective evidence was confirmed by their own

recollection of the three preachers of the gospel—"As ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake." The Thessalonians would have a very vivid recollection both of the preaching and the preachers. The three brethren were conspicuous by their holiness, their zeal, and their interest in the welfare of the Thessalonians. This was no self-flattery, for it was confirmed by the knowledge of their converts. 2. *The objective evidence of their election.* "And ye became imitators of us, and of the Lord, having received the Word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost." Their ready imitation of the apostle and his colleagues—which was, in truth, an imitation of Christ, so far as they were connected with him in his life and truth—was a practical proof of the sincerity of their conversion. The imitation was manifest in the spirit and circumstances of their reception of the truth. (1) The truth was received "in much affliction." The history of their conversion confirms this statement (Acts xvii. 5, 9). But the persecution continued after the departure of the apostle. The gospel had its drawbacks, but the Thessalonians were steadfast in their allegiance to the truth. (2) Yet it was received "with joy of the Holy Ghost;" that is, the joy that springs from his presence in the soul. They were thus imitating that apostle who "took pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake" (2 Cor. xii. 9, 10). The joy in question is (a) a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. v. 22); (b) it is essentially connected with the kingdom of God as part of its blessedness (Rom. xiv. 17); (c) it is capable of increase through the very presence of affliction (Acts v. 41); (d) it is the strength of the believer—"The joy of the Lord shall be your strength" (Neh. viii. 10); (e) its advent marks a distinct change in the world's history; (f) it ought to be constant (Phil. iv. 4); (g) it is maintained through abiding in Christ (John xv. 10, 11).—T. C.

Vers. 7, 8.—*The profound impression made by the conversion of the Thessalonians.* Having become imitators of the apostles and of our Lord, they soon became examples for the imitation of other Churches. Their conversion lifted them up into a sudden and distinct visibility in two directions.

I. THE GOSPEL WAS THUS CARRIED THROUGH NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN GREECE LIKE THE RINGING SOUND OF A TRUMPET. "For from you hath sounded out the Word of the Lord in Macedonia and Achaia." These two divisions of Greece, included in the Roman empire, received the report of the gospel, which went forth like a joyful sound, proclaiming with no uncertainty liberty to the captives. 1. *A work of grace in one place quickly leads to a work of grace in other places.* The tale of wonder is repeated with solemn surprise, gratitude, and expectation. 2. *Churches already in existence were stirred and stimulated by the visible work of grace at Thessalonica.*

II. THE REPORT OF THEIR FAITH RECEIVED A WIDE PUBLICITY EVERYWHERE, EVEN OUTSIDE THE LIMITS OF GREECE. This was not wonderful, for the city was, as Cicero says, in the very bosom of the Roman empire, a centre of business and influence which touched its furthest limits. Their faith must have had the solid stamp of reality to produce such a widespread sensation. It must have been practical and self-manifestative, for they did not hide it in their own breasts, but declared it by words and deeds. There was, therefore, no necessity for the apostle speaking about it—"so that we need not to speak anything."—T. C.

Vers. 9, 10.—*The nature of the impression made upon the world by the spectacle of Thessalonian piety.* It was a truly providential foresight that led the apostles at the beginning of the gospel to plant it first in the great cities of the world. Thus it first appeared at Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Thessalonica, Rome, and Corinth.

I. THE WORLD WAS FIRST IMPRESSED BY THE RAPID AND IMMEDIATE SUCCESS OF THE APOSTLES. "For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you." The world seemed to appreciate the boldness, the sincerity, the uprightness of the preachers, as elements of their success; for there was no dexterous flattery, there was no spirit of self-seeking, there was no guileful strategy, in the proclamation of the gospel.

II. THE WORLD WAS STILL MORE DEEPLY IMPRESSED BY THE BLESSED EFFECTS OF THE APOSTLES' PREACHING. "And how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God." 1. *It was a conversion from idolatry.* Immediately and at once they

received converting grace, under the influence of which they turned to the Lord from their dead and fictitious deities. (1) Idolatry is apostasy from God. These Thessalonians "had changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things," (Rom. i. 23). They had been "joined to their idols" for ages (Hos. iv. 17). They had been hitherto walking just like other Gentiles, in all moral blindness and carnality of heart (Eph. iv. 17, 18). (2) Their conversion was a repudiation of idolatry. It was not mere proselytism. It was the bursting asunder of ties which had an immense social as well as religious weight in pagan life. (3) It was a thorough consecration to the service of the living and true God. As their God was true God and living God, having life in himself and a true and faithful relation to his worshippers, they could give him the living service of faith, obedience, and dependence. 2. *Another effect of the apostles' preaching was their expectation of our Lord's coming.* The doctrine of the advent occupies the foreground in the thoughts of the Thessalonians, as in the two Epistles addressed to them. As faith underlies the service of the true God, so hope underlies the expectation of the Lord's coming. "And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivereth us from the wrath to come." (1) This implies the belief that Jesus is in heaven, to reign, to plead, to prepare a place for us. (2) It implies the belief that he will return from heaven. The Thessalonians may have believed that he would return in that age, but all Christians live in the "blessed hope" of his second coming. (3) This waiting attitude implied the recognition of a certain connection between Christ's resurrection and our deliverance from the wrath to come. They were not waiting for a dead man lying in a Jewish grave, but for One raised from the dead, and living in the power of an endless life. His resurrection implied the completion of his atoning work, as the work of atonement supplies the ground for our continuous deliverance from the wrath that is coming. There is a wrath coming upon disobedient sinners, but there is a way of deliverance provided in the Word of Jesus Christ ratified by his resurrection from the dead.—T. C.

Ver. 1.—*The address.* I. THE WRITER. 1. *He uses no title.* He does not style himself apostle. He asserted his apostolic authority when it was necessary to do so; for the sake of others, as in his Epistles to the Corinthians and Galatians. Now it was not necessary; the Macedonian Churches regarded him with affection and reverence. He simply gives his name, his new name—Paul. He had laid aside his old name, with all its associations. It recalled the memory of the famous king, Saul the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin. It recalled to the apostle the memories of his own old unconverted life, his self-satisfied Pharisaism, his persecution of the Church, especially that one saddest day of his life, when he consented to the death of the first martyr of the Lord, the holy Stephen. He had laid aside his old name, and with it his old modes of thought, his old life. Paul was, we may say, his Christian name; we do not read of it before the beginning of his first missionary journey; it was consecrated now by constant, untiring, self-sacrificing labour. It was known wherever Christ was preached as the name of the great missionary, the apostle of the Gentiles, the first of the noble band of Christian missionaries, who had left his home and all that once he loved to devote himself, heart and soul, to the mission work with all its hardships, all its dangers. Many holy men have trodden in his steps; but it was Paul who first set the high example, who kindled the sacred enthusiasm which has led so many saints in every age to fulfil the Lord's command, to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. *Paul* is a Latin name; it means "little." St. Augustine in one place suggests that St. Paul may have chosen it to mark himself as "the least of the apostles." There are other possible reasons for the change, and it may be thought that St. Paul would have shrunk from what might seem almost like a parade of humility. But at least we may find a lesson here. God exalteth the humble. *Paul* is a famous name. Others have borne it—some distinguished Romans; but it was reserved for the apostle to make the name honoured and beloved throughout the civilized world. The Paulus who conquered Macedonia at Rome is far less famous now than the Paul who won the Macedonian Churches for Christ. 2. *He associates others with himself.* Paul is the spiritual father of the Thessalonian Christians; he is the writer of the Epistle, not Silvanus or Timotheus (see 2 Thess. iii. 17). But they had laboured with him in

Thessalonica; Silvanus certainly, Timotheus in all probability; they had shared his dangers there; they were well known to the Thessalonians. So he joins their names with his own, recognizing their brotherly fellowship, their faithful co-operation, and shrinking, it may be, from putting himself into unnecessary prominence. He seeks not honour for himself; he has no literary ambition; his one aim is the salvation of his converts, the glory of God. (1) Silvanus, or, in the shortened form of the name, Silas. He, like St. Paul, was a Roman citizen, and bore a Latin name. It was, in the Latin mythology, the name of the sylvan god, who was supposed to protect the sheep, and save them from wolves. When he became a Christian, that name might perhaps serve to remind him of the great duty of tending the flock for which the good Shepherd died. He had been a leader in the Church at Jerusalem; he was a prophet (Acts xv. 32), that is, he had the gift of spiritual, inspired eloquence; he used it to exhort and confirm the brethren. He accompanied St. Paul in his first missionary journey; he worked with him, he suffered with him. In the dungeon at Philippi, his feet made fast in the stocks, he prayed and sang praises unto God. His presence and sympathy had cheered St. Paul in his dangers. Companionship in affliction had bound them very close to one another. When working together at Thessalonica they must have still felt the effects of the many stripes which they had received at Philippi. It was natural that St. Paul should mention Silas in writing to the Thessalonians. We may notice here that he furnishes one of the links which couple together the two apostles whose differences (Gal. ii. 11—21) have been so much magnified by heretics of old, by unbelievers now. St. Paul loved Silvanus; St. Peter counted him a faithful brother (1 Pet. v. 12). (2) Timotheus, St. Paul's dearest companion, his own son in the faith, bound to him with the closest ties of tender, personal affection. He stands first among the noble company of holy, loving fellow-workers whom St. Paul had drawn around himself. He was known to the Thessalonians; his name, indeed, does not appear in the record of St. Paul's visit to Thessalonica in the Acts of the Apostles. But we know that he was sent there afterwards to establish and to comfort the Thessalonian Christians concerning their faith (ch. iii. 2). Doubtless he was chosen for that work because of the Christian zeal, the loving, gentle sympathy which marked his beautiful character. He fulfilled his mission, and brought back to the apostle good tidings of the faith and charity of the Thessalonians. He greets them now.

II. THE CHURCH. 1. *The foundation of the Thessalonian Church.* St. Paul had been shamefully treated at Philippi; he had not lost courage. He came to Thessalonica; he went, as he was wont, to the synagogue. There he preached for three sabbath days; he "reasoned with them out of the Scriptures." He showed (as our Lord himself had shown to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus) that it was necessary that the Messiah should suffer, and should rise again from the dead; he showed that Jesus was the Messiah, the Christ. All true preaching must be full of Scripture; all true preaching must be full of Christ. St. Paul's words were greatly blessed. Some Jews believed, a great multitude of Greek proselytes, many ladies of rank. Those three sabbaths had been wonderfully fruitful; a Church was formed at Thessalonica. 2. *The word "Church."* This is the earliest of St. Paul's extant Epistles; it may be (possibly the Epistle of St. James was written earlier) the earliest of all the writings of the New Testament. Then, if we were to read the New Testament in chronological order, we should meet here with the word "Church" for the first time. St. James (ii. 2) uses the word "synagogue," not "Church." Our Lord, of course, used it earlier. He founded the Church. He had said, "On this rock will I build my Church;" and again, "Tell it to the Church." But the date of St. Matthew's Gospel is probably later than that of this Epistle. The Greek word means simply an assembly, a congregation, as the word "synagogue" means a meeting. It is derived from a verb which means to call out or summon, and is regularly used in classical Greek of the assemblies of citizens summoned by the magistrate in the Greek commonwealths for legislative or other political purposes (comp. Acts xix. 39); sometimes of other assemblies, as of the crowd of artisans collected by Demetrius (Acts xix. 32, 41). It is used of the congregation of Israel in Acts vii. 38; Heb. ii. 12; and sometimes in the Septuagint. The New Testament has taken the word and filled it with a new and holy meaning. It is the assembly which Christ hath chosen to himself out of the world—the flock of Christ. The visible Church of Christ is "a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure Word of God is

preached, and the sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same." The great day of Pentecost was the true birthday of the Church; the gift of the Holy Ghost then sent down from heaven knit together the disciples into one body, the mystical body of Christ. St. Luke gives us, in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, a description of the Church at that time. "Then they that gladly received the Word were baptized: . . . and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Thus the notes of the Church, according to Holy Scripture, are baptism, fellowship with the apostles, the doctrine of the apostles, the holy communion, public worship. The Church is also one, for it is one body in Christ, united into one fellowship by the indwelling of the one Spirit. It is holy, because it is being sanctified by the Holy Ghost; all its members are dedicated to God in holy baptism; they are all pledged by that dedication to follow after holiness of heart and life. It is catholic, because it is not confined to one nation, like the synagogue, but universal, world-wide, open to all who receive the Word of God. It is apostolic, because it is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-stone; and because it continues in the doctrine and fellowship of the apostles. It is the bride of Christ. "Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that he might present it unto himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." 3. *The Church of the Thessalonians.* Now there was a branch of the one Church at Thessalonica. (1) It was the second Church founded in Europe. The first was at Philippi, a small place, though a Roman colony. Thessalonica was a populous city, the metropolis of Macedonia. God plants his Church everywhere. It embraces all who will accept the gospel—poor and rich, ignorant and learned; it meets the deepest needs of all places alike—the quiet country and the stirring city. (2) It was already organized. It had its ministers (ch. v. 12, 13), and its assemblies for public worship (ch. v. 27). Short as St. Paul's visit was, he had, it seems, ordained elders there, as he was wont to do in every Church (Acts xiv. 23), and had provided for the regular meetings of the brethren. (3) It was in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ. This was its essential characteristic. As Chrysostom says, "There were many *ἐκκλησίαι*, many assemblies both Jewish and Greek. St. Paul writes to that assembly, that congregation, which was in God. It is a high exaltation, above all other possible dignities, to be in God." Thessalonica formerly lay in wickedness, in the evil one (1 John v. 19), in the sphere of his activity. Now, the Church there was in God. The presence of God was the very atmosphere in which the Church lived and moved. It lay in the everlasting arms, encircled with his embrace, guarded by his love. The words imply a close intimate union, an exceeding great depth of love and tenderness, a very great and profound truth, which does not admit of formal definition, and cannot be adequately expressed in language; but it is realized, in a greater or less degree, in the inner life of those true members of the Church who abide in that invisible, but most holy and most blessed, union with the Lord. God had breathed into the Church of the Thessalonians the breath of life—that new life, that eternal life, which consists in the personal knowledge of God. That life is in his Son. Christ is the Life. "He that hath the Son hath life." The Thessalonian Church was in the Lord Jesus Christ, as it was in God. "We are in him that is true," says St. John, "even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." The Church is in Christ, then surely Christ is God. The Church cannot be said to be in any creature; in St. Paul, for instance, or in any other of the holiest saints of God. Such an assertion would be unmeaning, blasphemous. Then in the first verse of the first of St. Paul's Epistles (the least dogmatic, some say, of all his Epistles, possibly the earliest of the New Testament writings), he distinctly teaches the great doctrine of the divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. "In Christ," "in the Lord," is a constant formula of St. Paul's; he is never weary of repeating it, never weary of enforcing the great truth that the Christian lives in Christ. Here he asserts the same thing of the Church as a whole. It is in Christ, living in his life, holy in his holiness, strong in his strength, glorious (John xvii. 22) in his glory; the glory of his presence now, the glory of eternal life with him henceforth in heaven. The Church is "in Christ;" its members must strive to realize the blessedness of that holy fellowship in their own individual souls.

Outward membership will not avail for our salvation, unless we abide in living spiritual communion with the Lord.

III. THE SALUTATION. 1. *Grace*. It is one of those words which the Holy Spirit has taken from common use and filled with a sweet and sacred meaning. (1) It is the gracious favour of God which rests upon all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. That favour is essentially free, spontaneous, flowing out of that eternal love which is intimately one with the very being of God. "God is love." It is given in and through the Lord Jesus; it is "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2) It is the gratitude, the spirit of joyful thankfulness, which should be the happy temper of those who believe in the grace of God. (3) It sometimes (as in Col. iv. 6) expresses the sweetness, the winning beauty, the dignified gracefulness of the true Christian character. The grace of God produces thankfulness, and gives grace and beauty to the life. 2. *Peace*. It was the first greeting of the risen Lord to his apostles, "Peace be unto you." It became the apostolic greeting. The Macedonian Churches had little outward peace; they were early called to suffer. They needed that blessed peace which God alone can give. (See homiletics on Phil. i. 2 and iv. 7.)

LESSONS. 1. Imitate St. Paul in his humility. Notice every feature, every manifestation of that great grace; it is hard to learn. 2. The Church, as a whole, is in God; in his guardianship, in his encircling love. We must strive and pray to realize that loving presence individually, to be in God ourselves. 3. Pray that grace and peace may rest on all who bear the Name of Christ.—B. C. C.

Vers. 2—6.—*The apostle's thanksgiving*. I. ITS CHARACTER. 1. *It is shared with his companions*. "We give thanks." The three friends prayed and gave thanks together. It is true that the plural number is characteristic of these Epistles to the Thessalonians; the singular is avoided, it seems, from motives of modesty. But here, immediately after the mention of the three names, it is natural to regard the thanksgiving as proceeding from all. It is a true Christian feeling that draws friends together for religious exercises. The faith, the love, of the one kindles, strengthens, the like graces in the other. The tide of prayer and praise from many hearts flows in deeper, fuller volume towards the throne. And we know that where two or three are gathered together in his Name, there is he in the midst of them. 2. *It is constant*. "We give thanks to God *always*." Thanksgiving is the joy of the redeemed in heaven; it is the outpouring of the Christian heart upon earth. The nearer we can approach to perpetual thanksgiving, the nearer we draw to heaven. "Sursum corda!"—"Lift up your hearts!" is an exhortation which we daily need. May God give us grace to answer daily, hourly, "We lift them up unto the Lord." 3. *It is for all*. The true shepherd knows his sheep; he loves them all, he prays for all. He does not divide them into parties. The closer his own walk with God, the more he is enabled to keep himself apart from and above party divisions. But the infant Thessalonian Church seems to have enjoyed the blessing of unity. It was not, like Corinth, distracted by strife and party feeling. 4. *It accompanied prayer*. Thanksgiving and prayer ever go together. The man who prays earnestly must give thanks, for prayer brings him into the sense of God's most gracious presence; and with that presence cometh joy—joy in the Lord. True prayer must involve intercession, for in answer to prayer the Holy Spirit is given; and the first, the chief of the fruits of the Spirit is love. St. Paul is a remarkable example of perseverance in intercessory prayer.

II. ITS GROUNDS. 1. *His remembrance of their spiritual state*. He was working hard at Corinth; in the midst of his labour, with all its new interests, he remembered without ceasing the Christians of Thessalonica. The care of all the Churches was already beginning to press upon him. He was unwearied in his labours, in his supplications, in his constant thoughtfulness for all the Churches which he had founded, for all the converts whom he had brought to Christ. Mark the extent, the comprehensiveness of his love for souls. 2. *His description of that state*. The Thessalonian Christians already exhibited the three chief Christian graces. (1) Faith, and that not a dead faith, but a faith that was ever working through love. St. Paul remembered their work of faith. Faith is itself a work, the work of God. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." It is itself a work, and it must work in the soul, for it is an active principle. It cannot exist with-

out working. Its working may not always express itself in outward action; it will do so when possible; but it will be always working in the inner sphere of the heart, producing self-purification, self-consecration, spiritual self-sacrifice. Each step towards holiness is a work of faith, hidden, it may be, from the eyes of men, but seen by him who searcheth the heart. The Thessalonians had shown their faith by their works. (2) Love, the greatest of the three, manifests itself in labour. The word is a strong one; "toil," perhaps, is a better rendering. Toil is not painful when it is prompted by love. True Christian love must lead the believer to toil for the gospel's sake, for the souls and bodies of those whom Jesus loved. The abundance of the Christian's labours is the measure of his love. "I laboured more abundantly than they all" (says St. Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 10): "yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." (3) Hope. The object of the Christian's hope is the Saviour—our "Lord Jesus Christ, which is our Hope." We hope for him—for his gracious presence revealed in fuller measure now, for the blissful vision of his glorious beauty hereafter. That hope is patient. The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth; the Christian waits patiently for Christ. It works patience in the soul. He can endure the troubles of life who is blessed with the lively hope of the inheritance reserved in heaven. The Thessalonians showed in their lives the presence of this lively hope. All this the apostle remembered without ceasing before God in his prayers and meditations. 3. *His confidence in God's election.* Himself "a vessel of election" (Acts ix. 15), he felt sure that the same gracious choice had rested on the Thessalonian Christians. God had "chosen them to salvation," he tells them in the Second Epistle. St. Paul loves to dwell on the great truth of God's election. 4. *The evidence of that election.* St. Paul finds it: (1) *In the lives of the Thessalonians.* Archbishop Leighton beautifully says, "If men can read the characters of God's image in their own souls, these are the counterpart of the golden characters of his love in which their names are written in the book of life. He that loves God may be sure that he was first loved of God; and he that chooses God for his delight and portion may conclude confidently that God hath chosen him to be one of those that shall enjoy him and be happy in him for ever; for that our love of him is but the return and repercussion of the beams of his love shining upon us." The Thessalonians received the Word; they showed the martyr spirit; they were content to suffer as Christians for the gospel's sake. They had joy amid tears—that holy joy which the presence of the blessed Spirit can give even in the midst of afflictions. They were learning in their own experience the meaning of that seeming contradiction, "Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing." They imitated the holy life of St. Paul, the holiest life of the Lord Jesus Christ. By this patient continuance in well-doing they were making their calling and election sure. (2) *In the energy and success of his own preaching among them.* He had brought them the gospel, the glad tidings of great joy. He had delivered his message with power, with the strength of deep conviction. The Holy Ghost was with him, teaching him what to speak, filling him with a Divine fervour and enthusiasm. His words were more than mere sounds; they were a message full of intense meaning—a message from God. The Thessalonians had felt the power of his preaching; they were his witnesses. This energy was not his own; it came from God; it proved that God was with him; it was a sure evidence that God was blessing the apostle's work; it was given for the sake of the Thessalonians; it surely meant that God had chosen them to be his own.

Learn: 1. To take delight in the spiritual progress, in the faith, hope, love of our fellow-Christians. 2. To thank God for it. 3. To refer all that seems good in us to God's electing grace. 4. To look for the evidence of that election in holiness of life.—B. C. C.

Vers. 7—10.—*The happy results of the conversion of the Thessalonians.* I. THEY BECAME AN EXAMPLE TO OTHERS. 1. *True piety tends to propagate itself.* The Thessalonians had not long embraced Christianity. But they had learned much; they had given their hearts to God. The Macedonian Churches gave St. Paul, from the first, deep and unmingled satisfaction. Thessalonica was the metropolis of Macedonia, the seat of government, a centre of trade. It became a centre of spiritual life. All believers throughout Macedonia and Achaia looked to the Thessalonians. St. Paul was now at Corinth, the chief city of Achaia. The Lord had much people in that city; but there were grave evils at Corinth, many causes for anxiety and distress. St. Paul must

have told the Corinthians often of the simple faith and obedience of the Macedonians. So the Thessalonians became an example to the converts whose lot was cast among the sensual temptations and the intellectual restlessness of the famous Peloponnesian town. The lives of good men are very precious; they are a living proof of the power of God's grace; they are facts which can be seen and tested; facts from which the reality of the forces which are working in the unseen sphere of God's spiritual agency can be inferred with as much certainty as the laws of nature from the facts of observation and experiment. 2. *The Word of God is living and powerful.* The Thessalonians had received it; it was in their hearts and on their lips. As the starry heavens with their silent witness declare the glory of God, so it is with the stars that are in the right hand of the Son of God (Rev. i. 20); their sound goeth forth into all the earth. That heavenly melody was issuing now from Thessalonica. "It hath sounded forth," St. Paul says, like a clear, thrilling trumpet-strain. It hath sounded, and still it sounds, reaching far and wide with its penetrating tones. The conversion of the Thessalonians was known not only in the neighbouring regions of Greece. The glad news had brought joy wherever the gospel had reached. It was not necessary for the apostle to praise the faith of the Thessalonians; men knew it, talked of it among themselves, reported it to the great missionary himself.

II. THE TESTIMONY THAT WAS BORNE TO THE FAITH OF THE THESSALONIANS. Christians talked: 1. *Of the wonderful success of St. Paul's preaching.* Those three weeks (he may have remained there somewhat longer) had been a time of marvellous fruitfulness. It was but an entrance, the time was so short; but what an entrance!—so full of power, so manifestly under the Divine guidance. The three men—Silas, of whom we know so little; Timotheus, shy and timid; Paul, of whom it was said in Corinth that his bodily presence was weak, and his speech contemptible,—they had done wonders in Thessalonica. God was with them plainly; there could be no other explanation of such strange unexampled energy. 2. *Of the change wrought in the Thessalonians.* They turned from idol-worship. The Thessalonian Church was mainly Gentile; there were a few Jews among them, but the Jews as a body bitterly persecuted the infant Church. The gospel was glad tidings indeed to thoughtful Gentiles. The Jews had great and precious truths, though their teachers had well-nigh hidden them under a mass of traditions and idle forms. But what was there in the heathenism of the day on which a thinking man could rest his soul? There were temples everywhere, but what man who felt the yearnings of the human soul for righteousness and God could in his heart reverence the deities who were worshipped there? So the Thessalonians turned from their idols: (1) To serve the living and true God. The Gentiles did not *serve* their gods. It could not be. They admired the temples and the statues as works of art; they regarded their religion as of some political importance, a part of statecraft. But now the converts were ready to *serve* God, for they began to know him. Their idols were dead things; the God whom Paul preached was living, loving, and powerful; they felt his power in their hearts, nay, he was the Life; all life (they knew now) came from him, and was his gift. Their idols were false gods, there was no truth in them; they were images of that which was not; for an idol, as St. Paul taught them, was "nothing in the world." The Thessalonians could see the snowy top of Olympus; the stories of the gods who dwelt there were but idle tales. St. Paul had taught them of the great Creator who is very God, living and true; nay, the one only Source of real life and being. He is the very God, the self-existing One, I AM THAT I AM. There is none other. (2) To wait for his Son from heaven. Hope is the key-note of this Epistle, as joy and faith are of the Epistles to the Philippians and the Romans. St. Paul had taught his converts not only to believe in God the Father who made us, but also in God the Son who redeemed us. He taught them the great truths of the Resurrection and Ascension, the blessed doctrine of the atonement. Some of the Thessalonians, perhaps, had tried to grapple with the dark mysteries of life, sin and misery. St. Paul pointed them to Jesus. "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world." There is wrath coming in its awfulness; but there is a Deliverer—One who is delivering us now, who is daily delivering us from the power of sin, as we draw nearer and nearer to him; who will deliver us from the punishment of sin, if by the gracious help of the blessed Spirit we abide in him. And this Deliverer is Jesus.

LESSONS. 1. The holy lives of Christian people help the blessed work of saving souls; holy lives are more persuasive than holy words. Let each Christian strive to do his part. 2. We are not in heathen darkness; God has given us the light of his gospel. Let us be thankful, and show our thankfulness in our lives. 3. Wait for the coming of the Lord Jesus; all our hopes are in him.—B. C. C.

Ver. 1.—*Introduction.* This Epistle has the distinction of being the first in time of all Paul's Epistles. The leading thought, to which there is reference toward the close of each of the five chapters into which the Epistle has been divided, is *the second coming of our Lord*. The first three chapters are personal, setting forth the apostle's connection with the Thessalonians, and interest in them as a Church. In the remaining two chapters he addresses them in view of their condition as a Church, and especially in view of anxiety connected with the second coming. Pleased with the progress they were making, he writes to them in a quiet, practical, prevailingly consolatory strain.

I. THE WRITERS. "Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy." Paul comes first, as pre-eminently the writer. It can be made out that the matter and style are characteristically Pauline. It speaks to his humility that he does not claim it as his own, that he does not put forward his official position, but associates two brethren with him as joint-writers. These, Silvanus (to be identified with Silas) and Timothy (less prominent at the time), assisted at the founding of the Thessalonian Church. Timothy had just returned from a visit of inquiry to Thessalonica. He therefore claims them as adding the weight of their influence with the Thessalonians to his own. And their place as joint-writers is accorded to them throughout. Only in three places, for a special reason in each case, does he make use of the singular number.

II. COMMUNITY ADDRESSED. "Unto the Church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." Thessalonica—so named by Cassander in honour of his wife, who was a sister of Alexander the Great—was well situated for commerce "on the inner bend of the Thermaic gulf—half-way between the Adriatic and the Hellespont—on the sea-margin of a vast plain watered by several rivers," the chief of these being the Axios and Haliacmon. Under the Romans it became a large, wealthy, and populous city; and was chosen as the Macedonian capital. Its importance has been well kept, up to the present day. Saloniki (slightly altered from Thessalonica) ranks next to Constantinople in European Turkey, with a population of seventy thousand. Paul visited Thessalonica in his second missionary tour, after the rough handling he had received in the other Macedonian city of Philippi. The Jews, being more numerous here than at Philippi, had a synagogue; and in this, Paul, for three sabbath days, reasoned with them from the Scriptures, opening and alleging that it behoved the Christ to suffer and to rise again from the dead, and that this Jesus is the Christ. The result was so far favourable. Some Jews were persuaded, and consorted with Paul and Silas; of the Gentile proselytes attached to the Jewish synagogue, a great multitude, and, among these, not a few chief women. But there was also what was unfavourable. The Jews as a body, being moved with jealousy, took unto them certain vile fellows of the rabble, and raised a tumult against the Christian preachers, which ended in their departing by night for Berea. Paul and his assistants had a *very short time* in which to found a Church in Thessalonica. For three sabbath days Paul reasoned in the Jewish synagogue. We may allow a little longer time for the ripening of Jewish opposition. Short as the time was, they had settled down to supporting themselves by labouring with their own hands. Short as the time was, the Philippian Christians, in their eagerness, had managed once and again to send unto Paul's necessity. What would render the formation of a Christian Church at Thessalonica easier was the number of Gentile proselytes who embraced Christianity. These had received training in monotheistic ideas, and had already the elements of a godly character. But, beyond this, many Gentile idolaters must have been brought in; for the entering in of Paul and his companions was signalized as a turning of the majority of them from idols unto the living and the true God. Under the conditions of time and manual labour and Jewish fanaticism, the founding of the Thessalonian Church was a most marvellous work. So short time with them, Paul wrote to them when he got to Corinth, after visiting Berea and Athens, about the close of the year 52. The Thessalonians are

addressed as a Church, *i.e.* in their corporate capacity, with corporate responsibilities and privileges, not as saints, *i.e.* in respect of the consecration of the members individually. They are addressed as a Church in God the Father, *i.e.* as having all the position of sons. They are also addressed as a Church in the Lord Jesus Christ, *i.e.* as a Christian family where the sons are all saved men placed under the superintendence of him who has the position of Lord, and distributes to their need.

III. GREETING. "Grace to you and peace." This did not necessarily exclude favour and peace from men, from these persecuting Jews. But whether it had that sweep or not, it certainly meant the Divine treatment of them, not according to merit, but according to infinite mercifulness, and the consequent freeing of them from all disturbing influences. It is what we should invoke for all our friends.—R. F.

Vers. 2—10.—*Manifestation of interest.* I. HOW THEY THANKED GOD FOR THE THESSALONIANS. "We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers." The three Christian preachers away at Corinth, and in the midst of their engagements there, were interested in their Thessalonian converts. They were so interested as to act as *priests* for them. This they did at the throne of grace, praying for them by name, in view of their special needs as a Church. This they would also do unitedly, praying to all the more purpose that they united their prayers; for a threefold cord is not easily broken. Noah, Daniel, and Job in a land may not counteract all wickedness; but Paul, Silas, and Timothy, agreeing as touching what they asked for a progressing Church like Thessalonica, would certainly mean valuable help to them from heaven. Praying, they gave thanks *always*. This designation of time is not to be understood with the utmost strictness. It is prescribed in Exodus that Aaron should bear the judgment of the children of Israel (the Urim and Thummim) upon his heart before the Lord continually, *i.e.* whenever he went into the holy place to discharge the pontifical functions. So the meaning here is that, whenever these men of God went into the presence of God to discharge the priestly function of prayer for the Thessalonians, their hearts were filled with gratitude for them, which they poured forth in thanksgiving. They gave thanks to God, who had made the Thessalonians a Church, who had blessed them hitherto, and upon whom they depended for future blessing. They gave thanks to God for *them all*. They did not know of any (and their information was recent) who were bringing dishonour on the Thessalonian society. They were all with one heart helping forward the common Christian good.

II. UPON WHAT THEY PROCEEDED IN THANKING GOD FOR THE THESSALONIANS. "Remembering without ceasing." They proceeded in their thanksgivings upon what they remembered of the Thessalonians. The impression produced at the time had not been effaced by fresh scenes, new engagements, the lapse of time. By thinking of them and hearing from them their impression of them had not ceased to be lively. This impression concerned the three Christian graces—*faith, love, hope*. In 1 Cor. xiii. love is placed last, the object being to exalt it, in its permanent value, over the other two. Here, as also in the fifth chapter and in Col. i., and virtually in Titus ii., the natural order is followed, faith manifesting itself in love (Gal. v. 6), and hope rising out of love (Rom. v. 5). Hope is also properly held to come last, as the link between the present and the future. What the Christian pioneers remembered was the practical outcome of each grace. 1. "*Your work of faith.*" In the eleventh of the Hebrews we read of special works which were produced by faith. But the work, in its *totality*, which each man produces, is the life which he lives before the world. And he who believes that there is the eye of the holy, heart-searching God upon him; that he is here to carry out the Divine behests; that according as he does or does not carry out these behests does he lie under the Divine approval or disapproval; that there is a judgment coming which shall prove each man's work of what sort it is;—such a man will surely produce a work very different from him who habitually looks only to the seen and the temporal. The adoption of faith as the principle of their lives meant to the Thessalonians the abandonment of many vices, and the cultivation of sincerity, humility, purity, temperance, and other Christian excellences. 2. "*And labour of love.*" The word translated "labour" approaches the meaning of painful effort. We are not merely to wish well to others and to rejoice in their good;—that implies no *laboriousness* of love. But we are to burden ourselves with the wants of others, and to undertake labours on behalf

of the sick, on behalf of the poor, on behalf of the oppressed, on behalf of the ignorant, on behalf of the erring. The Thessalonian Christians were full of these labours; their Church life had become *one labour of love*, a putting forth of painful effort for each other, without thought of reward, with only the desire to please the Master. It was a labour of purest, freest love, that the Master himself undertook on behalf of those whom he was not ashamed to call his brethren. 3. "*And patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.*" Hope was the characteristic grace of the Thessalonians. It was hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, which is more exactly defined in the Epistle as hope with regard to his coming. It was a hope which burned in them with extraordinary intensity. So eager were they as to the time of its realization that there was a likelihood of impatience being engendered by delay. When the Thessalonians are remembered here for the patience of their hope, we are to understand the brave way in which they maintained the conflict with sin within, and especially with persecution without. It is the hope of victory that sustains the soldier under all the hardships of the march and the dangers of the battle-field. So it was the hope of the infinite compensation that there would be at the coming of Christ that sustained them under the disadvantages of their position. What to them were all that their enemies might inflict on them, when any day Christ might come among them for their deliverance? They could say with their teacher, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed to us-ward." *Additional circumstance.* "Before our God and Father." This points to the solemnity and also the joy of the remembrance. It was in prayer that it took place. It was there before the God of Paul and Silas and Timothy, the Heart-searching One, who could testify that it was no formal remembrance, but was marked by sincerity. It was also before their Father, who, as Infinite Benevolence, regarded it with pleasure.

III. THERE IS NOTED THE FACT OF THE ELECTION OF THE THESSALONIANS. "Knowing, brethren beloved of God, your election." Paul, for himself and his helpers, addresses them as brethren. What they had in common was that they were beloved of God. What marked them as objects of Divine love was their election. This is a word of deep and gracious import, which is more opened up in other places in Scripture. What marked ancient Israel was that they were the election. In succession to ancient Israel, Christians were the election. Among others these Thessalonian Christians had most of them been elected out of heathenism, elected to all the privileges of the new covenant. They owed this their position not to their own merits. It was no doings of their own that brought Christ into the world. It was by circumstances over which they had no control that the gospel was preached to them in Thessalonica. It was not in their own strength that they believed. It was Divine love, then, that gave them their position among the election, and to Divine love was to be all the praise.

IV. PAUL AND HIS HELPERS CAME TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR ELECTION BY CONSIDERATION OF DIVINE ASSISTANCE VOUCHSAFED IN PREACHING TO THEM. "How that our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; even as ye know what manner of men we showed ourselves toward you for your sake." The gospel is the glad tidings of salvation to all men. It could only be called *their* gospel inasmuch as they used it instrumentally in the conversion of souls. It was Christ who was the great Subject of it. "Neither is there salvation in any other." These three agreed as to the purport of the gospel. It was not different from the gospel as preached by Peter or any other Christian teacher. In dealing with the Jews in Thessalonica, as we learn from the Acts of the Apostles, the gospel proper was accompanied with the producing of proof from the Old Testament Scriptures that the Messiah was to suffer and to rise from the dead; and the fitting into it of other proof that the historical Jesus, who had lately been on the earth, met all the requirements of their Scriptures. But to Jews and Gentiles alike it was the free offer of salvation, based on the great facts of the death and resurrection of God's Son in our nature. This gospel had come to them in Thessalonica; it had providentially been directed their way. It had come to them in word, in the Word preached, and that was a great point gained. "For how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" But it had not come in word only, but also in power. They felt power descending on them in the delivery of their message. This was nothing else than the assistance of the Holy Ghost. And it was accompanied with the deep assurance that

their message was taking effect. The Thessalonians themselves had the proof of their being men who were divinely assisted toward them. And, as this Divine assistance was granted in their interest, it pointed to their being in the number of the elect.

V. PAUL AND HIS HELPERS CAME TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ELECTION OF THE THESSALONIANS BY CONSIDERATION OF THEIR POWER OF IMITATION. "And ye became imitators of us, and of the Lord, having received the Word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost." There is a point of *difference*. They *preached* the Word, or rather—for a new aspect is brought up—the Lord in them. It was the Lord's message they delivered; they were the instruments of the Lord in its delivery. It was, therefore, the Lord as well as they, and more than they, in the preaching. On the other hand, the Thessalonians *received* the Word. This is not inconsistent with what is said in the Acts of the Apostles in connection with Berea: "Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so." For the meaning there is that the Berean Jews were a nobler class than the Thessalonian Jews, which is no reflection on the Thessalonian Christians, who, with few exceptions, were Gentiles. The testimony of this Epistle is that they were a Church peculiarly receptive of the Word. Allowing for this difference which the sense requires, the imitation is to be restricted to the associated circumstances and spirit. "In much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost." It was the Word that gave rise to much affliction. And it is not to be wondered at that, when the light comes into conflict with darkness, this should be the result to those who are associated with the light. In much affliction the three subordinates and the great Superintendent in them drew joy from the Word preached. "Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing," said the greatest of the three. In the same affliction the Thessalonians were imitators, in drawing joy from the Word received. They were not crushed under the affliction, but, imbibing the comfort of the Word, they rose triumphant over it. In both cases the joy, which was not to be thought of as earthly, proceeded from the Holy Ghost dwelling within. This was the second thing that pointed to their election.

VI. THE THESSALONIANS WERE SO GOOD IMITATORS AS TO BECOME AN ENSAMPLE TO OTHERS. "So that ye became an ensample to all that believe in Macedonia and in Achaia." These were the two Roman divisions of Greece. It is implied that the circumstances of the Grecian Churches were similar. To believe was, more or less, to be opposed, to be afflicted. The Thessalonians were an encouragement to the other Churches. Philippians, Bereans, Athenians, Corinthians, might all take heart from the manner in which the Thessalonians triumphed over their affliction.

VII. THERE WAS A WIDESPREAD REPORT REGARDING THESSALONICA WHICH WAS VERY SERVICEABLE. "For from you hath sounded forth the Word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth; so that we need not to speak anything." This shows how the Thessalonians could be an ensample to so many. There was the condition of *publicity*. In the language which is used, prominence is given to the Word, and it is characterized, not now as "our gospel," but as "the Word of the Lord." From them at Thessalonica the Word of the Lord had sounded forth. The Word of the Lord sounds forth, not merely when we preach it, but also when, as these Thessalonians did, we receive it and allow it to have influence upon our lives. From them at Thessalonica there had been a notable sounding forth. The image employed is that of a trumpet, filling with its clear sound all the surrounding places. Hill and valley, hamlet and homestead, are waked with it. So the gospel-trumpet had been sounded at Thessalonica, and the result is represented as the filling of all Greece with the clear sound of the gospel. Its wakeful sound had reached the important places, not only in Macedonia, but in Achaia. There is suggested by this what the Church has to do for the world; it has to sound the gospel-trumpet, so that, without any hyperbole, the whole world shall be filled with the clear sound of the gospel. The sounding forth from Thessalonica had reached even to places beyond Greece. And, in giving expression to this, Paul, as he sometimes does, gives a different turn to the sentence. We should have expected it to run so as to be complete: "Not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in places beyond." He, however, lays hold on what the Word had notably done for the Thessalonians, viz. made them monotheists, given them faith to God-ward,

and the sentence is made to run: "But in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth." "The currency of the reports was probably much promoted by the commercial intercourse between Thessalonica and other cities, both in Greece and elsewhere. Wieseler suggests that Aquila and Priscilla, who had lately come from Rome to Corinth (Acts xviii. 2), might have mentioned to the apostle the prevalence of the report even in that more distant city. If this be so, the justice and truth of the apostle's hyperbole is still more apparent; to be known in Rome was to be known everywhere." This may be true, but still it is to be borne in mind that the sounding forth to distant places is rather ascribed to the vigour with which the gospel-trumpet had been sounded at Thessalonica. By the going forth of their faith there was great service done. In preaching the gospel in new places, it was Paul's custom to hold up what it had done for other places. With regard to Thessalonica, he was placed in an exceptional position. In Berea, in Athens, in Corinth, wherever he went, he needed not to labour in language to create an impression of what the gospel had done for Thessalonica. He needed not to say anything, the work being already done for him.

VIII. THE TWO POINTS TO WHICH THE REPORT REFERRED. 1. *The entering in of Paul and his helpers.* "For they themselves report concerning us what manner of entering in we had unto you." This has already been particularized. It was their gospel coming unto the Thessalonians, not in word only, but also in power, and the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. It was that attested by the Thessalonians. It was the Lord in them preaching the Word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost. Now it is generalized—"what manner of entering in we had unto you." They did not need to enter upon that; the people themselves in the various places came forward with their acknowledgments. This was important to the three ministers; it was a seal to their ministry, it was added influence in the proclamation of the gospel. A minister may well aspire to have such a record. 2. *The response of the Thessalonians.* "And how ye turned unto God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead." This is an expansion of the previous words, "your faith to God-ward." They had been idolaters. This is to be understood of the Thessalonian Church as a whole, which points to its composition. They turned unto God from idols. There is marked their *conversion to monotheism*. They turned from idols "to serve a living and true God." The old translation is better here: "to serve the living and true God." Idols are dead; their living touch upon the soul can never be felt. They turned from dead idols to the living God, the God in whom we live and move and have our being, who giveth to all life and breath and all things. Idols are false and vain, they can do no good to their votaries. They turned from false and vain idols to the true God, who cannot deceive his worshippers, who comforts and cheers them, who is the Rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Turning from idols, they made their life a service of this living and true God—not a dead, make-believe service, but characterized, from its object, by life and truth, a waiting on him to carry out his behests. There is marked their *conversion to Christianity*. They turned from idols to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead. They laid hold on the great Christian fact, that God gave up his Son to die for man. They also laid hold on the other great Christian fact, that God raised him from the dead and raised him to heaven. They further believed, on Divine authority, that God's Son was to come from heaven. Round this their life as a Church very much revolved; they were fascinated by its influence. They waited for his Son from heaven; they lived in daily expectation of his coming. While we are not curious about the *time* of Christ's coming, let us not lose the influence of the *fact* of Christ's coming. Let us consider whether we are prepared for his coming. Let us be dead to the charms of the world, dead also to its opposition. Let us take comfort, under present troubles, from this coming (John xiv. 1—3). Let us joyfully anticipate the coming (1 Pet. i. 8). We may well learn from the Thessalonians to give this subject greater prevalence in our thoughts. Let us, like them, be found in the attitude of expectancy. Christ's last message to man is this: "Yea, I come quickly." And the reply which we are expected to make is this: "Amen: come, Lord Jesus." "Even Jesus, which delivereth us from the wrath to come." This is the first of the three references to the wrath of God in this First Epistle to the Thessalonians. It is an element that is more largely prevalent in the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians. It was natural that,

writing so much to the Thessalonians about the second coming, he should introduce the future wrath. The full expression in this place, "the wrath to come," had already been used by one who could preach the terrors of the Law. When the Baptist saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said unto them, "Ye offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" Paul, standing after the great Messianic manifestation, could say more definitely and mildly, "Even Jesus, which delivereth us from the wrath to come." (1) *The reality of the wrath.* By the wrath of God we are to understand the disposition which leads him to inflict punishment for sin. It cannot be said of God that he is wrathful, or that wrath is the predominant feature in his character. For "he delighteth in mercy;" but "judgment is his strange work." When men put themselves in opposition to God, while he is displeased, he is also grieved. We read of the grieving of the Spirit; of Christ, while looking round on his audience with anger, being grieved at the hardening of their hearts. Even when God, from necessities of government, may have to remove the reprobate from his presence, there is not wanting the tone of indignant rebuke, "Cast ye out the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth." But with this righteous indignation there is no mingling of malice, but only a feeling of infinite reluctance to resort to such a measure with any of his creatures. It is supposed to be derogatory to the Divine character that there should be wrath in the heart of God at all. But how is he to regard sin? Is sin to be committed under his government, and no notice to be taken of it, especially when it is of the very nature of sin to strike at the Divine government? Such an idea would certainly be repudiated in connection with human government. Or are we to suppose that he can become accustomed to the sight of sin, so as not to heed this sin or that sin in the great multitude that are committed every day upon this earth? But God can never see sin to be other than it really is. It stands out before him in all its details and in all its vileness, as that which interferes with his government, thwarts his holy ends among men. And as he has taught us to flash out in anger against wrong-doing, so we must believe that his own soul flashes out in anger against wrong done to his government. But we must exclude from the Divine out-flashing such inequality as attaches to human outflashing. The Thrice-holy One never knows the perturbing influence of passion; sin is not felt more keenly at the first, and less keenly when time has exerted its sway—it is ever unchanged before his mind. He continues unsatisfied, and the fire burns within him against it, until it is removed out of his sight. So far from wrath being derogatory to God, it must enter into a right conception of the Divine character. It is necessary to the *consistency* of the Divine character. To favour the following of a certain course, and yet to view with indifference the following of an opposite course, is simply characterlessness. According to the ardour with which we regard one course must we burn against its opposite. We must think of God as infinitely favouring righteousness; and he would not be true to himself if his feelings did not infinitely burn against iniquity. According as he is attracted to the pole of holiness, so powerfully must he be repelled from the opposite pole of sin. Even under the New Testament economy it is said that "our God is a consuming fire." More prominence is given to this in the Old Testament, but it is a necessary conception of God, that, as he is consumed with zeal for the cause of truth and love, so he is a consuming fire to all that is opposed to it. There is a certain course which he favours—which he puts forward as obligatory. He gives us every encouragement to follow this course; it is the consuming desire of his heart to see it followed by us. This may be said to be the course of humble dependence upon him. If we follow this course, he is pleased, and he marks his pleasure, by making our humility return in liberty and happiness upon ourselves. But if we wilfully assert our independence and follow our own course, then God will make our wilfulness recoil in bondage and misery upon our own souls. Wrath is even necessary to our rising to a proper conception of the *Divine compassion*. We miss what the Divine compassion is, unless we first apprehend ourselves as objects of the Divine wrath. "That heathen antiquity had no idea of God's love is attributable to the fact that it had no living conviction of the world being under God's wrath. Plato and Aristotle rise only to the bare representation of God as being a jealous God; and men who in our day speak of dispassionate love rise no higher than they." (2) *The time to which the wrath is referred.* The wrath to come is the disposition of wrath in its future manifestation.

It is in the next world that it is to come to its full manifestation. Even now God manifests his displeasure against sin. The Flood was an early and signal instance of God's wrath burning against a wicked world. And the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah was another signal instance of God's wrath burning against wicked communities. But under the present order of things God does not ordinarily deal with man in unmixed wrath. He has ends of redemption in view. And, though he does give experience of judgment that men may not be forgetful of him, still he mingles mercy with judgment. And usually he gives us to experience far more mercy than judgment, that thereby he may commend redemption to us. He exercises wonderful forbearance toward us, that thereby he may win us over to himself. Thus it is that meantime there is no adequate impression given of the punitive justice of God. We do not see punishment following always upon sin. We do not see punishment proportioned to sin. The more hardened in sin men are, the more may they escape present punishment. It does not yet appear what God's displeasure against sinners is, any more than it yet appears what his love to his people is. There are hindrances which prevent a full manifestation in both cases. In the next world these hindrances will be removed, and then it will be seen clearly how God views every one who through a period of grace continues to oppose himself to Divine love. The sins of this life, unforgiven, will cry unto God; and his wrath, no longer restrained, will go forth. There are things for which, it is said in the Epistle to the Ephesians, the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience. There is a certain open defiance and forgetfulness of God (encouraging to ungodliness) which in a special manner attracts the Divine judgment. But it is true of a sinful life as a whole, that what there is in it of resistance to God draws down on it, when the time comes, the Divine wrath. This is to be at the day of judgment, which is called "the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." Then there will be a righteous summing-up of the life lived on earth as a whole; and the wrath that descends will exactly indicate what God's estimate of the life is. That there will be retribution, and retribution exactly proportioned to each life, some being punished with few stripes and others with many stripes, is most certain. We cannot define with exactness the manner and contents of the retribution. The language employed in Scripture is sufficiently fitted to create alarm: "But unto them that are factious and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, shall be wrath and indignation, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that worketh evil." What is at first the assertion of independence toward God, will become, retributively, hindrance and bondage in complete subjugation and environment by God. What is, in its working, excitement and self-gratification, will become, retributively, in the distraction of the mind, in the upbraidings of conscience, a feeling of anguish. There is thus before the life of sin a dark future. "There remaineth a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries." And the life of sin is not to be judged by what it is at present in its licence and excitements and restraint of judgment, but is to be judged by what it is to come to. It is in the next world that the nothingness and wretchedness of a life of sin will be fully evidenced. And what a powerful deterrent is this to continuing our resistance to Divine grace! (3) *The Deliverer from the wrath to come.* This is the gracious side which is now presented in the gospel. We must think of the wrath to come, in order that we may properly conceive of the Deliverer. He is appropriately called Jesus. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for it is he that shall save his people from their sins." Here it is saving from the wrath of God on account of their sins. We read of heroes of antiquity who were renowned for delivering countries from the monsters with which they were infested. The New Testament tells of One who delivers from the evil most to be feared of man—the wrath to come. It is not to be understood that Jesus *did* deliver (on the cross) or *will* deliver (at the last day), but rather that it is his *office* to deliver. This is the great part which he performs for men; it belongs to Jesus to deliver from the wrath to come. This office entailed on the Holder of it infinite self-abnegation. "The Son of God, . . . even Jesus." And, as the Son of God, he had to begin by laying aside his Divine glory, not counting it a prize to be clutched at by him. And he came down into our nature, that he might receive into himself the wrath due to our sin. He became the great vessel of wrath. What should have been poured into us

was poured into him. Thus the Deliverer is the greatest of all sufferers. He is one who has marks of mysterious sorrow and anguish upon his nature. And that shows how far it is from being according to the heart of God to make men miserable, to send wrath upon them. He interposes between the sinner and the results of his sin in this great Deliverer sent forth from his own bosom. He says, "Save from going down to the pit, for I have found a ransom." Rather does he inflict wrath upon his Son than inflict it on us. So far as his doing is concerned, he has removed the wrath to come—he has made it non-existent. Is that not proof, the most conclusive, that wrath is most abhorrent to him, that in his heart of hearts he wishes us to escape from wrath, wishes to make us all happy? (4) *Our relation to the Deliverer.* It is said here, "which delivereth us from the wrath to come." And the context shows that the reference is to *believers*. All are welcome to come into a saving relation to Christ; but, as a matter of fact, all do not come. In Thessalonica there were many to whom the gospel of deliverance came, who, in their idolatrous life, thought it an idle tale. There were some who, tired of their idolatrous life, welcomed the thought of deliverance, and gave a ready ear to the apostle when he told them of Jesus "which delivereth from the wrath to come." And there are many still in our more enlightened times who treat wrath and deliverance from it as an intrusion. The great work which Jesus accomplished has no interest to them. They like to go on in their own self-pleasing way, heedless of the issues. There are others, and these are the believers, who are unsatisfied in a life merely in the present. They are anxious to know how they are to meet the eternal issues. And feeling unable to do this themselves, as guilty before God, they shelter themselves in Jesus, "which delivereth from the wrath to come." Taking him as their Representative, entering into the full benefit of his deliverance, the future is relieved to them, and, for the first time, they breathe freely as in the atmosphere of heaven. Out of Christ the wrath to come is still a reality, and a reality which has been made more dreadful to those who refuse to escape from it. In Christ let us take the comfort of our position, let us dismiss our fear of future wrath; and let us remember him to whom we owe our escape, and let us prove our gratitude by a life of loyalty to our Deliverer.—R. F.

Ver. 3.—Works of grace. In writing to the Corinthians St. Paul singles out three Christian graces for supreme honour—faith, hope, and love. Here he selects the same three graces, but not simply to praise them for their own inherent merits. They are now regarded in their energetic operation, as powers and influences; and the fruits of their activity are the subjects of the apostle's thankful recognition. He makes mention in prayer of the *work* of faith and *labour* of love and *patience* of hope.

I. CHRISTIAN GRACES ARE ACTIVE POWERS. They are beautiful in themselves, but they are not to exist solely for their own beauty. Flowers are lovely, but the object of the existence of flowers is not that they may dream through the summer hours in their loveliness, and then fade and wither and die. They serve an important end in the economy of plants by preparing fruit and seeds. 1. The active operation of Christian grace *glorifies God*. While dwelling only in the depths of the soul, quiescent and secret, they do not show forth the glory of God. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit" (John xv. 8). 2. The active operation of the Christian graces is a *means of benefiting our fellow-men*. Faith, love, and hope are not given to us for our own enjoyment only. They are aids for our mission in life—the mission of serving God by serving mankind. We must let them have their perfect work, that this mission may be fulfilled. 3. The active operation of the Christian graces is a *proof of their vital health*. "Faith apart from works is barren" (Jas. ii. 20). By the fruits they bear we know how far we have the graces within us.

II. CHRISTIAN GRACES HAVE THEIR SEPARATE SPHERES OF ENERGY. 1. *Faith has its work*. When we both believe and actively trust in the helps of the Unseen, we are encouraged to use them, and when we yield ourselves in faith to the will and law of the Unseen, we learn to obey the authority above us. Hence the work of faith. This is characterized by decision—it is no wavering, hesitating, intermittent activity—by calmness and by energy. 2. *Love has its labour*. Labour is harder than work. It implies great effort, toil, and trouble. Love goes beyond faith and undertakes greater tasks. But with love "all toil is sweet." An enthusiasm amounting to passion characterizes

this activity and distinguishes it from the sober work of faith. Love to God and love to man are necessary for the hardest work. It was not mere faith, it was love, that inspired the awful toils and sacrifices of Christ. 3. *Hope has its patience.* This is the passive fruit of Divine grace. It is not therefore the less important, nor does it therefore show the less energy. We need strength for endurance as much as strength for action. Christian hope manifests its energy by unflinching perseverance in spite of present crosses and distresses.

III. CHRISTIAN GRACES MUST CO-OPERATE FOR THE RIPENING OF THE FULL CHRISTIAN LIFE. St. Paul rejoices that all three of the primary graces were in active operation in the Thessalonian Church. Characters are too often one-sided. Faith is hard if love is wanting. Love is weak and wild if it is not supported and guided by faith. Hope is an idle dream without these two graces, and they are sad and gloomy if they are not cheered by hope. As the cord is far stronger than the separate strands, faith, hope, and love united produce energies many times greater than the results of their individual efficacy. The perfect Christian character is the character that is developed into rich fruitfulness on all sides. All the colours in the bow must blend to produce the pure white of saintliness.—W. F. A.

Ver. 5.—*The dynamic gospel.* If we may illustrate spiritual truths by describing them in the terminology of physical science, we may say that the great mistake which the Church, as well as the world, has been making over and over again is that of treating the gospel statically instead of dynamically—as a settled creed to be embraced in its rigid form rather than as a power to be submitted to in its progressive influence. But it is evident that the apostles cared not one straw for their preaching except in so far as it was the vehicle of Divine energy. They taught the truth, not as professors of metaphysics in a college, but as workmen who were bringing a new force to bear on the reconstruction of society.

I. IT IS VAIN TO RECEIVE THE GOSPEL IN WORD ONLY. 1. It may be *published*. A heathen country may open its ports to missionaries. Bible societies may circulate the Scriptures through every country and hamlet. Preachers may never cease to expound it. And all this will be as nothing for the spiritual welfare of people who will not hear, understand, believe, and submit to the truth. 2. It may be *heard*. Crowds may flock to the churches. Attentive congregations may hang upon the lips of popular preachers. And still no good may be done while the truth is not understood, believed, and obeyed. 3. It may be *understood*. The meaning of the language used may be intelligible enough. People may give themselves the trouble of thinking out the subjects presented to them by the preachers. Still all is vain if the gospel is not believed and submitted to. 4. It may be *believed*. The truth may not be doubted. We may have a certain conviction of it, and yet even this may count for nothing without the faith that accepts the influences and follows the directions of the gospel. There is a world of difference between believing the gospel and believing in Christ; at least, in the only way in which this is of practical importance, viz. as a trustful acceptance of his grace and a loyal devotion to his will. So long as we come short of this we may have the gospel, but it will be "words, words, words"—the letter that killeth, not the spirit that quickeneth.

II. THE GOSPEL MAY BE RECEIVED IN POWER. This very statement seems to strike some people who have long been familiar with the words of the gospel as a new revelation, as itself a fresh gospel. But we have to learn the power as well as the truth of the gospel if it is to be of any real good to us. 1. The operation of the power of the gospel consists in *changing the hearts and lives of men*. The gospel does not simply promise future salvation. It effects present regeneration. The new birth is the essential beginning of redemption. Nothing but a power, vast, overwhelming, penetrating, and omnipotent, can make new creatures of old, stubborn profligates and hypocrites, men of the world, and self-righteous Pharisees. 2. The secret of the power of the gospel is in *the baptism of the Holy Spirit*. The new man is "born of the Spirit" (John iii. 5). Christ is "the Power of God," because he baptizes with the Holy Spirit (Matt. iii. 11). Christ expressly connected the power of apostolic preaching with the gift of the Holy Spirit: "Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts i. 8). Preachers need this to give force to their words, and hearers to receive the truth effectually. 3. The sign of the power of the gospel will be *much assurance*. The

faith which grows out of experiencing this power will be much stronger, more vivid, and more joyous than that of first believing the truth of the gospel.—W. F. A.

Ver. 6.—Affliction with joy. The Christians of Thessalonica had no sooner accepted the gospel than they were attacked with swift, sharp persecution; and it is to be remarked that, while in other places the apostles were often assailed and the converts spared, here the full force of the assault fell on the infant Church (Acts xvii. 5—10). St. Paul frequently refers to the sufferings that so quickly tested the faith of this brave Christian community at the very commencement of its new life (ch. ii. 14; iii. 2-5). But in spite of persecution a peculiar joy seems to have possessed the Church at Thessalonica. The Epistles to the Thessalonians are to be distinguished for hearty congratulations and a spirit of gladness. Here is an apparent paradox, which, however, when regarded from a higher standpoint, resolves itself into a spiritual harmony.

I AN EARTHLY PARADOX. St. Paul was much inclined to the use of startling paradoxes. His vigorous mind seemed to delight in facing them. Thus his style is rugged with great contrasting ideas. 1. *The gospel does not prevent affliction.* To the Thessalonians it was the means of bringing suffering. Christians often suffer more of earthly trouble, rather than less, than others (Heb. xii. 8). Though the gospel is good news, and though it brings gladness to the soul, it may be ushered in with storms and sufferings in the outer life. This might be expected, seeing that it is in conflict with the prince of this world. 2. *Affliction does not prevent the experience of the joy of the gospel.* In spite of much affliction, the Thessalonians had joy. The world sees only the outside. Hence its common verdict that religion must be melancholy. It can see the flaming fagots; it cannot see the exultant heart of the martyr. It is a great truth to know that, when God does not remove trouble, he may give us such gladness of heart as shall entirely counteract it. Surely it is better to rejoice in tribulation than to be sad in prosperity.

II THE SPIRITUAL HARMONY 1. *The affliction is external, while the joy is internal.* The two belong to different spheres. It would be impossible for one and the same person to be in temporal prosperity and adversity at the same moment, or to be at once in spiritual sunshine and under spiritual clouds. But it may well be that, while the earthly sun is shrouded in gloom, the heavenly sun is shining in full splendour. 2. *The affliction comes from earthly causes, the joy from heavenly.* Men persecute, the Holy Spirit inspires joy. Here are different sources of experience, and accordingly the experiences differ. 3. *The affliction rather helps the spiritual joy than otherwise.* It prevents men from looking to external things for comfort. It enables them to see that true joy must be inward and spiritual.

In conclusion, observe that affliction is no reason for the rejection of the gospel, since this is not therefore the less true, and it claims to be received on its truth, not on our pleasure, and also because the joy it brings will not be lessened by any external trouble.—W. F. A.

Ver. 8.—How the Word is sounded forth. **I. THE NEED OF SOUNDING FORTH THE GOSPEL.** This is a fine expression, "sounded forth;" not merely whispered in the ear, but proclaimed far and wide; with a fulness, a richness, and a power that command attention. Such is the proclamation that the royal message of the gospel deserves. 1. *The gospel comes from God.* It is not like the composition of an obscure man. If God opens his mouth, surely his words must be worthy of publishing in trumpet-notes. 2. *The gospel is for all men.* It is not a secret doctrine for the cultured few. All the world needs it, all the world has a right to have it. Therefore it should spread over wide territories and penetrate to remote districts. The alarm-bell must be resonant, the bugle-call must be clear and piercing, the shepherd's voice must be high and full that the wandering sheep may hear it and return to the fold. 3. *The gospel is conflicted by other voices.* Men are preoccupied. The din of the world renders them deaf to the message from heaven. The world will not lie in solemn stillness to hear the angels sing. The sound of the gospel must go forth so that deaf ears shall be unstopped, and walls of prejudice fall flat like those of old Jericho at the trumpet-notes of Israel's priests.

II. THE METHOD OF SOUNDING FORTH THE GOSPEL. 1. It must be sounded *by living men.* A written gospel is not enough. Soul must stir soul. 2. It must be sounded

in the conduct of Christians. It would seem that St. Paul was thinking rather of the influence of the heroic endurance of the Thessalonians and of their spiritual prosperity than of the missionary labours of evangelists sent out by them, for he writes of how they became an ensample to all that believe in Macedonia and in Achaia; and how in every place their faith to God-ward was gone forth. The loudest, clearest, most eloquent, most unanswerable proclamation of the gospel is the unconscious testimony of Christian living. 3. It may be sounded forth with redoubled energy from the *midst of affliction*. The troubles endured by the Thessalonians tested and revealed their faith, and so led to the fuller proclamation of the gospel. "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." Men never preach Christ so perfectly as when they die for him. The torch that kindled Latimer's fagots at Oxford kindled a glorious fire of reformation throughout England. 4. It can be sounded forth with greatest effect from *central positions*. Thessalonica was the capital of Macedonia. What happened there was not done in a corner. Christian testimony witnessed at this great centre would spread far and wide. It is our duty to establish Christian influences in prominent places. While not boasting of our own doings, and not letting our left hand know what our right hand doeth, we should still not hide our candle under a bushel, but so let our light shine before men that we may glorify our Father which is in heaven, and remember that, if a city which is set on a hill cannot be hid, it is most important that the light of the gospel should shine from such a place.—W. F. A.

Vers. 9, 10.—The great change. The Thessalonians were converted heathens. To them the blessedness of the gospel would be largely measured by its contrast with the darkness of paganism. In Christendom the language descriptive of the acceptance of the spiritual blessings of the gospel would, of course, be different. But little else than the language; and with the essential, spiritual signification of it, even this would scarcely need altering. St. Paul regards the great change in two aspects, present and future.

I. THE PRESENT ASPECT OF THE GREAT CHANGE. "Ye turned unto God from idols, to serve a living and true God." 1. *It is emancipation from an evil service and enlistment in a good service.* In the old condition a man is a servant, of idols, of sin, of passion, of the world, of Satan. He thinks himself free, but he is really a miserable slave. In the changed condition the Christian is freed from this thralldom. But he is not the less a servant. He no longer serves in hard bondage. Love is his chain, and free devotion his service. Still he serves. 2. *It is the giving up of death and falsehood and the acceptance of truth and life.* (1) The idol is lifeless. All worldly, sinful living is a devotion to lifeless gods, to mere material things that perish in the using. The Christian serves a living God, who can give vital grace, accept loving devotion, and commune with his people. (2) The idol is false. Idolatry is a lie. All earthly things when exalted into gods become unreal and only mock their devotees. God is real, and he only can be rightly served in spirit and in truth. We come to reality, to fact, to truth, when we come to God.

II. THE FUTURE ASPECT OF THE GREAT CHANGE. 1. It consists in a *turning from wrath*. Whether we anticipate it with fear, or delude ourselves in the dream of evading it, or simply ignore it with stolid indifference, the fact remains that for all of us, while in our sins, there is a certain looking for of judgment. If we are children of sin we must be children of wrath. It is no small blessing to be able to face the future and to see that reasonably and righteously all the horror of Divine wrath is gone in the free pardon of sin. It is like turning one's face from the lowering thunder-cloud to the silver light of sunrise. 2. *It leads on to an anticipation of the coming glory of Christ.* All the early Christians were much occupied with this anticipation, but none more so than the Thessalonians. The hope of the Parousia is an ever-recurrent theme in the two Epistles of St. Paul to this Church. His own mind must also have been very full of it when he wrote these letters. In their immediate expectation—at least, as far as a visible appearance and triumph of Christ was concerned—the first Christians were disappointed. But the great promises still cheer us as we wait for the glory that is reserved in the future. The Christian conversion thus not merely results in a deliverance from wrath; it inspires a grand hope and promises a rich glory in the days to come.—W. F. A.

EXPOSITION.

CHAPTER II.

CONTENTS.—Paul turns from the reports of others to the experience of the readers. They themselves knew that his entrance was not powerless; although maltreated in Philippi, he was emboldened to preach the gospel at Thessalonica. His preaching did not proceed either from delusion on his part or from a desire to delude others. He felt approved by God, and was actuated by no improper motives: he sought neither their praise nor their money; so far from insisting on his apostolic rights, he was gentle among them, and conducted himself with the tenderness of a nursing mother toward her children; and so far from his ministry being a pretext for covetousness, he had laboured for his own support; and thus he could confidently appeal to the Thessalonians as witnesses of the blamelessness of his conduct. And as his entrance among them was not powerless, so he thanked God that it resulted in their reception of the gospel; they had embraced it as the word of God, and had not shunned persecution for its sake; they had in this become the imitators of the Churches in Judea. The apostle then alludes to his earnest desires to see them; twice he had attempted to come to Thessalonica, and twice he had been prevented by the machinations of Satan. They were very dear to him—the objects of his tender affections, and the source of his rejoicing before the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming.

Ver. 1.—**For yourselves, brethren;** in contrast to other persons. Not only do strangers report the power and efficacy of our preaching among you, but you yourselves are experimentally acquainted with it. **Know our entrance in unto you;** referring, not merely to the mere preaching of the gospel to the Thessalonians, but to the entrance which the gospel found into their hearts—to its coming, not in word only, but also in power (ch. i. 5). **That it was not in vain;** not empty, useless, to no purpose,—descriptive of the character of the apostolic entrance among them. Our entrance among you was not powerless, unreal; on the contrary, it was mighty, energetic, powerful. The reference is chiefly to the manner or mode in which Paul and his companions preached

the gospel, though not entirely excluding the success of the gospel among the Thessalonians (comp. 1 Cor. xv. 14, "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain").

Ver. 2.—**But even after we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated.** As the word here rendered "suffered before" does not in itself imply that the sufferings were unjust, the apostle adds, "and were shamefully entreated." As ye know, at Philippi. We are informed, in the Acts of the Apostles, that Paul and Silas were publicly scourged and cast into prison; and scourging with rods was regarded as an ignominious punishment, and therefore was forbidden to be inflicted on Roman citizens, such as Paul and Silas were. "They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison" (Acts xvi. 37). **We were bold in our God to speak unto you.** The word here rendered "bold" denotes boldness or freedom of speech; and hence some render the clause, "We were bold of speech in our God, so as to speak unto you" (Ellicott). Perhaps, however, as the verb "to speak" follows, it is better to render the clause, "We were confident in our God to speak;" or "emboldened to speak" (R.V., "we waxed bold"). This boldness or confidence was in our God, that is, on account of our fellowship or union with him. **The gospel of God.** The genitive of origin, denoting, not merely that God was the Object, but that he was the Author of the gospel. **With much contention;** or, *in much conflict* (R.V.), alluding to the peril and danger with which Paul preached the gospel in Thessalonica.

Ver. 3.—**For our exhortation.** This word has a twofold signification, denoting both "exhortation" and "consolation;" when it refers to the moral conduct it denotes exhortation, but when it is an address to a sufferer it denotes consolation. In the gospel these two meanings are blended together. **Was not of deceit.** Not in the sense of guile, which would be tautological, but simply "error," without any direct evil intent; our gospel was not a delusion—we were not ourselves deceived. **Nor of uncleanness;** a word usually employed to denote sensuality, and in this sense the meaning is—We did not, like the heathen in their worship, give occasion to unclean practices: "We have corrupted no man" (2 Cor. vii. 2). The word, however, may be taken in a more general sense, as denoting impurity of disposition, impure motives: such as the impure desire of applause or of gain, to

which the apostle afterwards alludes. Or of guile. As we were not ourselves deceived, so neither did we attempt to deceive others. The apostle did not adapt his religion as Mahomet, to suit the prejudices or passions of men; he did not employ any seductive or temporizing arts; but he boldly went in the face of the prevailing religions of the age, both of the Jews and of the Gentiles.

Ver. 4.—But; in contrast. As; according as. **We were allowed.** The old English for “approved.” Of God. The word rendered “allowed” signifies tried, tested as gold is tested in the fire, and hence also the result of that trial, “approved.” As we were esteemed worthy to be put in trust with the gospel; entrusted with its publication. **Even so;** in this condition of approval and trust. **We speak, not as pleasing men, but God, that trieth.** The same verb that is rendered “allowed” in the first part of the verse; hence “proveth,” or “approveth.” **Our hearts.** Not a general statement, “God who is the Discerner of the heart;” but “our hearts,” namely, of us, the publishers of the gospel—Paul and Silas and Timothy; thus appealing to God, as the infallible Judge of their sincerity.

Ver. 5.—For; confirming the statement that the preachers of the gospel did not seek to please men, but God. **Neither at any time used we flattering words;** endeavouring to gain you by flattery and praise; we did not pander to your feelings; we did not soften the demands of the gospel. **As ye know, nor a cloak—or pretext—of covetousness.** We did not use the gospel as a pretext to mask our real motive, which was covetousness, pretending to seek your spiritual good, whereas in reality we sought our own advantage. Paul could with perfect confidence appeal to his converts, and say, “I have coveted no man’s silver, or gold, or apparel” (Acts xx. 33). He was free from all sinister motives. “He did not use words such as flattery uses, or pretexts such as covetousness” (Jowett). **God is witness.** Paul appeals to the Thessalonians themselves that he had not used flattering words; so now he appeals to God that the motive of his conduct was not covetousness. Men can judge the external conduct, they can hear the flattering words; but God only can know the motive of action—he only can discern the covetousness.

Ver. 6.—Nor of (or, from) men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome. These words admit of two meanings. The apostle may refer to his refusal to seek maintenance from the Thessalonians, and in this sense become a burden to them. But such a meaning does not suit the context; and besides, this refusal of maintenance is after-

wards alluded to by the apostle. The reference here is not to maintenance, but to glory: we did not seek glory from you, when we might have been burdensome, when we might have done so. Hence the word is to be taken in the sense of honour, importance; when we might have claimed honour. **As—in virtue of our character as—the apostles of Christ.** Paul does not speak of himself alone, but he includes Silas and Timothy, and therefore the word “apostles” is to be taken, not in its restricted, but in its wider meaning.

Ver. 7.—But. The apostle now describes his conduct positively. **We were gentle;** a word used of the amiable conduct of a superior toward an inferior, as of a master toward a servant, a prince toward his subjects, or a father toward his children. “The servant of God must not strive, but be gentle toward all men” (2 Tim. ii. 24). Some manuscripts read, “We were babes among you”—the difference being only the addition of another letter. **Among you;** in our intercourse with you. **Even as a nurse; or rather, a nursing mother,** for the children are her own. **Cherisheth;** the word employed for birds warming and cherishing their young. **Her children.** A stronger expression of tenderness and love could hardly be made. Even as a nursing mother dedicates her life for her infant; so, says Paul, we are willing to dedicate ourselves for you. Some important manuscripts read the verse thus: “But we were babes among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children;” but this arises from an obvious error of the transcriber.

Ver. 8.—So being affectionately desirous of you; a strong expression in the original: “being filled with earnest love for you.” **We were willing.** The word denotes a pre-determination of the will: “we esteemed it good.” **To have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls.** An evident climax: not only were we willing to preach the gospel of God to you, but more than this, to sacrifice our own lives for your advantage. The word here rendered “souls” denotes lives; and the meaning is that the apostle was willing to submit to death for the sake of the Thessalonians. The plural “we” still implies Paul and Silas and Timothy. The thought is—As a nursing mother not only nourishes her children, but is also ready to sacrifice her life for them; so the apostle not only nourished his spiritual children with the pure milk of the gospel, but was ready to sacrifice his own life for their spiritual maintenance; thus expressing in the strongest manner the womanly tenderness of the apostle toward his converts. **Because ye were dear unto us.**

Ver. 9.—**For**; a proof or confirmation of this dearness of the Thessalonians to the apostle. **Ye remember, brethren**; recalling to their recollection his conduct when he was with them. **Our labour and travail**. These two terms frequently occur together (2 Cor. xi. 27; 2 Thess. iii. 8), and can hardly be distinguished; “labour,” or “toil,” is active, denoting exertion; “travail” is passive, denoting weariness or fatigue, the effect of the exertion. **For labouring**; in its strict meaning chiefly used of manual labour. Paul here refers to his working for his own support as a tent-maker. **Night and day**. Night precedes according to the Jewish mode of reckoning. It does not denote that the apostle made up by labour at night the loss of time during the day which his higher duties, as a preacher of the gospel, occasioned; that he wrought at his trade at night, and preached during the day; but the phrase, “night and day,” denotes incessantly, continually. **Because we would not be chargeable to any of you**. Not a proof of the poverty of the Church of Thessalonica; but the reason of this unselfish conduct of the apostle was that no hindrance should arise on his part to the spread of the gospel; that no imputation of selfishness or covetousness should be laid to his charge. As he had done at Thessalonica so the apostle acted in other places. Thus at the time he was writing this Epistle he was working for his support at Corinth (1 Cor. iv. 12; 2 Cor. xi. 9). And such was also his practice at Ephesus; for in his farewell address to the Ephesian elders he could appeal to them: “*Ye, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me*” (Acts xx. 34). **We preached unto you the gospel of God**. Thus freely, without charge.

Ver. 10.—**Ye are witnesses, and God also**; ye of the outward conduct, and God of the motives which actuated us. **How holily and justly and unblamably**; “holily” denoting the apostle’s conduct to God, “justly” his conduct to man, and “unblamably” the negative side of both particulars. **We behaved ourselves among you that believe**. The apostle here refers to his own personal demeanour and to that of Silas and Timothy among them, in order that the Thessalonians might realize the purity of their conduct, and so might continue steadfast in their attachment to the gospel which they taught. He mentions specially “them that believe,” not that he acted otherwise among those that did not believe, but because believers were cognizant of his conduct.

Ver. 11.—**As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children**. The translation of this verse is somewhat faulty; it

ought to be, as in the R.V., *as ye know how we dealt with each one of you, as a father with his own children, exhorting you, and encouraging you, and testifying*. Paul here changes the image from that of a nursing mother to that of a father; because then he was speaking of his tender care for his converts, whereas here he speaks of the instructions and admonitions which he gave them; as a mother he nourished their spiritual life, and as a father he superintended their spiritual education. “**Exhorting and comforting and charging**,” representing three modes of the apostle’s instructions: “**exhorting**” denotes also encouraging and consoling; “**comforting**” denotes supporting and sustaining (“*Comfort the feeble minded*,” ch. v. 14); and “**charging**” denotes testifying or protesting—a solemn pressing home of the exhortation to the hearers.

Ver. 12.—**That (or, to the end that) ye would walk worthy of God**; so as to adorn the gospel of God. So in the Epistle to the Colossians: “**That ye would walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing**” (Col. i. 10). **Who hath called you**; or, as the best attested manuscripts read, *who calleth you*. **To his kingdom and glory**. Not to be weakened as if it were a Hebraism for “his glorious kingdom,” or “the kingdom of his glory;” but the kingdom and glory are to be viewed as two different objects. “**God called you to his kingdom**,” namely, the Messianic kingdom which he has established on earth; and which will be completely realized at the advent. And “**God called you to his glory**,” namely, the glory which is in reserve for all the members of his kingdom.

Ver. 13.—**For this cause**. Not because God has called you to his kingdom and glory, but, referring to what follows, because of your reception of the gospel. **We thank God**. Although the reception of the gospel was in one sense the free and voluntary act on the part of the Thessalonians; yet in another sense it was the act of God who ordained them to accept the gospel; their belief was an operation of God in them. **Without ceasing, because, when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us**; literally, *because when ye received from us the Word of hearing, which is of God*. The gospel is called “the Word of hearing,” because it came by hearing; hence “the Word heard,” or “the Word of the message” (R.V.). It is further designated “of God”—the Word whose Author is God. **Ye received it not as the word of men**—as if it were of human origin—but as it is in truth, the Word of God—of Divine origin—which effectually worketh. The pronoun *may* refer to God, “*who effectually worketh*,” or better to the Word of God, as the principal subject of the sentence. **Also in you that believe**. The gospel

was powerful as respects the preachers, and effectual as respects the hearers.

Ver. 14.—For ye, brethren, became followers; or rather, *imitators*, namely, in the endurance of suffering for the sake of the gospel, not in intention only, but in reality. Of the Churches of God which in Judæa are in Christ Jesus. These Churches are mentioned as being at this early period the most prominent. The special mention of persecution by the Jews has its origin in the fact that it was by the unbelieving Jews that Paul was persecuted at Thessalonica. For ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen. One of the proofs that the Church of Thessalonica was Gentile in its origin; as these countrymen were evidently Gentiles, being here distinguished from the Jews. From this it would seem that, after Paul and his companions had left Thessalonica, the persecution which arose against the Christians continued, and the Gentiles combined with the Jews in opposing the gospel. Even as they—the Churches of God in Judæa—have of the Jews. We learn from the Acts of the Apostles that the Jewish Christians in Judæa were exposed to severe persecution from their unbelieving countrymen: Stephen was put to death, and Paul himself, in his unconverted state, was a chief among the persecutors.

Ver. 15.—Who both killed the Lord Jesus; emphatic, to point out the greatness of their wickedness. And their own prophets; or, as some manuscripts read, *and the prophets*. This crime was often laid to the charge of the Jews: thus, by our Lord, “Ye are witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets” (Matt. xxiii. 31); and by the protomartyr Stephen, “Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?” (Acts vii. 25.) And have persecuted us; literally, *driven us out*, as Paul and Silas were expelled from Thessalonica. And they please not God, but are contrary to all men. The hatred and contempt which the Jews bore to other nations is noticed by Tacitus, Juvenal, and other heathen writers. Thus Tacitus writes of them: “They are faithful to obstinacy, and merciful toward themselves, but toward all others are actuated by the most irreconcilable hatred (*odium humani generis*).” And Juvenal says, “They will not show the road to one who was not of their religion, nor lead the thirsty person if uncircumcised to the common spring.” Perhaps, however, the apostle refers here, not to the enmity of the Jews to the human race in general, though perfectly cognizant of their bigotry and intolerance; as this enmity was a perversion of their peculiar distinction as the people of God; but rather to their opposition to his preaching the gospel to

the Gentiles—to their extreme reluctance that the Gentiles along with themselves should be admitted into the kingdom of God.

Ver. 16.—Forbidding us—by contradicting, blaspheming, slandering, laying snares—to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved. Not that the Jews were averse to the proselytism of the Gentiles, provided they were circumcised and kept the Law of Moses; on the contrary, Judaism at this period was a proselytizing religion; but their great objection to the preaching of the gospel was that the preachers did not insist on the Gentiles becoming Jews before they became Christians. And, accordingly, we learn from the Acts of the Apostles that the unbelieving Jews were the most violent and implacable enemies of the gospel. Of the numerous persecutions mentioned in the Acts, there were only two, namely, those at Philippi and Ephesus, which were not occasioned by the Jews. To fill up their sins *always*; so that the measure of their iniquity became full to overflowing. Their forbidding the apostles to preach to the Gentiles was the last drop which caused the cup of their iniquity to overflow (comp. Gen. xv. 16, “The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full”). The remark of Professor Jowett is well worthy of notice: “In the beginning of sin and evil it seems as if men were free agents, and had the power of going on or of retreating. But as the crisis of their fate approaches, they are bound under a curse; and the form in which their destiny presents itself to our minds is as though it were certain, and only a question of time how soon it is to be fulfilled.” For the wrath; that wrath which was predicted and is merited by them. “Wrath” is here used for punishment, which is the effect of wrath. Is come upon them to the uttermost; literally, *to the end*. The apostle here refers to the judgments of God, which were impending on Jerusalem and the Jewish people; judgments which were fearfully executed in the awful sufferings they endured in the Jewish war, and in the destruction of their city by the Romans.

Ver. 17.—Here a new chapter ought to have commenced, passing on to another subject, the apostle's desire to visit the Thessalonians. But we, brethren, being taken from you; literally, *being bereaved of you* (R.V.). For a short time; literally, *for the space of an hour*. And yet it was several years before the apostle revisited Thessalonica; but he here speaks of the short period—a space of six months—which had already separated them; not, as some suppose, that his mind was so full of the ideas of eternity that he overlooked all

divisions of time. In presence, not in heart. Similar expressions are common in Paul's Epistles, denoting his love for his converts; thus: "Though I be absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in the spirit" (Col. ii. 5). Endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire; because our separation has been so short. As has been well observed, "Universal experience testifies that the pain of separation from friends and the desire to return to them are more vivid, the more freshly the remembrance of the departure is on the mind" (Lünemann).

Ver. 18.—Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul. Paul distinguishes himself, because in all probability his companions, Silas and Timothy, had been at Thessalonica after he had left it. Once and again. Not used indefinitely, but referring to two separate attempts which Paul made to revisit the Thessalonians. But Satan hindered us; denoting, not the enemies of Christianity, but the devil, the author of all the hindrances in the kingdom of God. Paul here recognizes the personality of Satan, as the author of all evil, the great opponent of God and Christ. We are not informed by what instrumentality this hindrance of Satan took place. It may refer to the various persecutions against Paul, which prevented him returning to Thessalonica, and especially to that persecution raised against him in Berea by the Jews of Thessalonica (Acts xvii. 15). In one

sense, indeed, the hindrances arose in the way of God's providence, for under its direction all the journeys of Paul were placed, and Satan could not have hindered him from preaching the gospel in any quarter, unless by the Divine permission (comp. Acts xvi. 7; Rom. i. 13).

Ver. 19.—For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? or, *glorying*. The apostle calls the Thessalonians his "hope," not because he anticipates any reward from their conversion, or because their conversion would counterbalance his former persecution of the Christians, but because he hoped to meet them in glory; he calls them his "joy," because he would rejoice with them in their final salvation; and he calls them his "crown of rejoicing," because he regards them as trophies of the victory of the gospel which he preached. Similarly he calls the Philippian "his joy and crown" (Phil. iv. 1). Are not even ye; or rather, are not ye also?—ye as well as other Christians? In the presence of—before—our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming; at the restoration of his Messianic kingdom.

Ver. 20.—For ye are our glory and joy. Some refer this verse to the present, and the former verse to the future; not merely at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but even now ye are our glory and joy. But there is no reason for this distinction; the words are merely confirmatory, and added from the fulness of the apostle's emotions.

HOMILETICS.

Vers. 5, 6.—*Motives of action*. Man judges us by our outward conduct; God by our internal disposition. The apostle appeals to God as a witness of the purity of his motives. He asserts that he was free from all desire of personal fame or interest. Can we make the same appeal and the same assertion? 1. Are we influenced by unworthy motives? Is covetousness, the desire of fame, or the love of power, the mainspring of our life? 2. Or are we influenced by worthy motives? Do we seek to please, not man, but God? Is the glory of God in Christ Jesus the chief end of our life and actions?

Vers. 7, 11, 19.—*The true pastorate*. 1. *Its qualities*. Paul compares himself to a nursing mother and a father. A minister should resemble the one in his tenderness and loving sympathy, and the other in his wisdom and firmness. 2. *Its mode*: exhorting, comforting, and charging. 3. *Its reward*: (1) conversion of the hearers; (2) a joyful meeting with them at the coming of the Lord.

Ver. 12.—*Our high and holy calling*. We ought to walk worthy of God, so as: 1. To obey God's laws. 2. To imitate God's moral perfections. 3. To enjoy God's fellowship. 4. To adorn God's gospel. 5. To promote God's cause. 6. To live to God's glory.

Ver. 13.—*The gospel a Divine revelation*. 1. *Negatively*. The gospel is not the word of man; not the result of man's wisdom; does not spring from a development of human thought; its doctrines are not within the sphere of the human intellect. 2.

Positively. The gospel is the Word of God. This seen from its origin, its contents, and its efficacy.

Ver. 16.—*Beware of opposing the gospel.* The Jews did so. They endeavoured to prevent the apostle preaching to the Gentiles, and wrath came upon them to the uttermost; and so will all opposition made to the gospel terminate (Ps. ii. 6, 9). If we ourselves will not embrace the gospel, let us beware of throwing obstacles in the way of those who would. Especially let parents beware how they act toward their children when under religious impressions.

Ver. 18.—*The opposition of Satan to the gospel.* "Satan hindered us."

I. THE PERSONALITY OF SATAN. Christ and Satan, the heads of two opposite empires—the one the kingdom of light, and the other the kingdom of darkness; the one the source of all that is good, and the other the source of all that is evil.

II. THE AGENCY OF SATAN. He hindereth the spread of the gospel. He worketh in the children of disobedience. Mode of his operation; the instruments which he employs.

III. THE FINAL VICTORY OF CHRIST OVER SATAN. Though Satan hindereth the gospel, yet it is only for a season. "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under our feet shortly" (Rom. xvi. 20).

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Vers. 1—4.—*Effectiveness of the gospel. Entrance into Thessalonica.* It was not necessary, however, to depend upon foreign testimony for the facts of the case, for the Thessalonians themselves were the best witnesses. "For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain," but an effective living reality, a great and gracious success. The proof of the fact is contained in two circumstances.

I. THE BOLDNESS OF THE THREE PREACHERS. "But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much conflict." The insulting treatment the apostle had received at Philippi had not the effect of scaring him away, or of leading him to withdraw into Asia, leaving Europe to its fate. Such treatment would have deterred men of a different stamp. His boldness was not mere stoical courage, but based on faith, for he was "bold in our God," and was equal to present perils as well as to past persecutions; for he spoke the gospel of God "in much conflict," caused, as we know, by the league of violence which the Jews of Thessalonica formed with "lewd fellows of the baser sort" against the gospel.

II. THE SPIRIT AND METHOD OF THEIR MINISTRY. "For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile." The matter is exhibited first negatively, and then positively. 1. *Negatively.* His persuasive exhibition of the truth was not (1) "of deceit." He was not deceived himself—he had not "followed cunningly devised fables"—neither did he design to deceive others, for he preached the truth as it is in Jesus. Therefore there was all the greater force and fervour and directness in his teaching. (2) "Nor of uncleanness." There were no impure or sinister ends in his teaching, implying love of gain; nor any disposition to tolerate those subtle forms of temptation which sometimes manifest themselves even under the guise of piety. (3) "Nor in guile," for he was straightforward and sincere in his methods, with "no cunning craftiness," no manoeuvres, no strategy; for they had "renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully" (2 Cor. iv. 2). 2. *Positively.* The method of his preaching met with the Divine approval. "But as we were approved of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, who trieth our hearts." (1) The gospel is a solemn trust, a rich treasure. There are many human trusts which men would rather shrink, but the apostle is not unwilling to accept this trust for the good of the world. (2) He claims no independent worthiness for so sacred a trust. God gave him any worthiness or sufficiency he possessed. "Our sufficiency is of God, who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament" (2 Cor. iii. 5, 6). (3) He discharged his trust (a) with a perfect disregard for men's opinions about him (1 Cor. iv. 3); (b) and with no desire to catch the favour of men. "Not as pleasing men;" for "as of sincerity,

as of God, in the sight of God, speak we in Christ" (2 Cor. ii. 17). "Not sacrificing truth to the fancies or prejudices of men in order to secure their favour. If "he pleased men, he should not be the servant of God" (Gal. i. 10). (4) He had supreme and final regard to the all-seeing God, "who trieth the hearts," who knows the springs of all actions, discovers all artifices, and brings all hidden things to light. Men look on the outward appearance. God "spares all beings but himself that awful sight—a naked human heart." He "seeth not as man seeth." It is vain, therefore, to appear other than we are.—T. C.

Vers. 5—8.—*The spirit and method of apostolic labour.* The apostle sets it forth under two aspects.

I. NEGATIVELY. "For neither at any time were we found using words of flattery, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness, God is witness; nor seeking glory of men." 1. *The apostle and his colleagues did not attempt to win their way by flattery*, either by setting forth high views of human nature, or by holding men's persons in admiration for the sake of advantage; for their gospel tended rather to humble man and subdue his pride. Flattery is a gross dishonour both to God and man, for it implies untruthfulness, and may become fatal in its results to easily deluded sinners. The apostle appealed to the Thessalonians in confirmation of his statement. 2. *They did not use their position as a cloak of covetousness*, as God could testify, who knows the heart. The apostle might say now, as he afterwards said to the elders of Ephesus, "I coveted no man's silver, nor gold, nor apparel." The false teachers were chargeable with covetousness, for "through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you" (2 Pet. ii. 1, 3). How emphatically the apostle insists upon ministers of the gospel being free from this vice! "Not greedy of filthy lucre." 3. *They were not fond of vain-glory.* "Nor seeking glory of men, neither from you, nor from others, when we might have been burdensome as apostles of Christ," or might have stood on their dignity as apostles of Christ. There is no allusion here to his claim to ministerial support, but rather to the position of magisterial dignity he might have assumed, with all its pomp and peremptoriness and sternness. His spirit at Thessalonica was not that of lordship over God's heritage.

II. POSITIVELY. "But we were gentle in the midst of you, as when a nurse cherisheth her own children." 1. *They were gentle in their intercourse with their converts*; unassuming and mild, with no haughty or imperious airs, challenging honour and homage. They acted in the very spirit of the good Shepherd. Long afterwards the apostle could remind one of his present colleagues that "the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle to all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves" (2 Tim. ii. 24—26). This gentleness, which is at once a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. v. 22) and a characteristic of the "wisdom from above" (Jas. iii. 17), becomes all the more impressive when it is linked with the highest strength of character. 2. *They were most affectionate in their intercourse with their converts.* "Even so, being affectionately desirous of you, we were well pleased to impart to you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were become very dear to us." (1) Their yearning love was manifest: (a) In their imparting the gospel to them. As their spiritual parents they travelled in birth till Christ was formed in them, and then they fed them thereafter with the sincere milk of the Word. (b) In their readiness to risk their lives for the sake of their children in the faith. They verily carried their lives in their hands. (2) This apostolic solicitude on their behalf sprang out of their deep love for the Thessalonians, as being at once the trophies of their ministry, and as being pre-eminently docile in their attitude toward the gospel and its preachers. There is hardly any stronger tie in this world than that which links together a spiritual father and his converts.—T. C.

Ver. 9.—*A retrospect of his disinterested and self-sacrificing labours.* He next recalls the circumstances of his ardent and laborious ministry amongst them. "For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: working night and day, that we might not burden any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God."

I. THE MINISTRY OF THE APOSTLE WAS ALWAYS LABORIOUS. He could say to the Corinthians that "he had approved himself as the minister of God in labours;" that "in

labours he was more abundant" (2 Cor. vi. 4, 5; xi. 23); exhausting his strength daily in his eager anxiety to reach the people with the gospel of God. If ever man went to the edge of his possibility, it was the Apostle Paul. The labour might be exhausting in itself, or on account of the obstacles thrown in his way, but it became the habit of his daily life.

II. IT WAS DOUBLY LABORIOUS AT THESSALONICA ON ACCOUNT OF THE NECESSITY HE IMPOSED UPON HIMSELF OF WORKING FOR HIS LIVING. Occupied in preaching or teaching through the day, he devoted his nights to his craft as a tent-maker. 1. *The necessity in question was not imposed by either the Mosaic or the Christian Law.* He showed to the Corinthians that alike natural justice, the Mosaic ordinance, and positive law, as announced by our Lord himself, required them to support the ministers of the gospel (1 Cor. ix.). "They who preach the gospel shall also live of the gospel." 2. *It was a necessity based upon a high Christian expediency.* At Corinth he thought good "not to use his power in the gospel," and therefore preached the gospel there "without charge." The malignity of Jewish enemies led him to avoid even the appearance of covetousness, or of attempting to "make a gain" of the Corinthians. We do not know under what circumstances he was led to pursue a similar course at Thessalonica. It may have been from similar accusations, or from a tendency he had observed among certain saints in the city to forswear work and go about as "busybodies." But his policy was exceptional, and affords no rule in modern times unless the circumstances should again become exceptional. 3. *It was a necessity cheerfully accepted for the good of the Thessalonians.* He had but two means of support in the city. (1) He was not supported by supernatural means, like Elijah in the desert. (2) He was occasionally helped by the thoughtful kindness of the Philippians. "I robbed other Churches," he tells the Corinthians, "taking wages of them to do you service." He tells the Philippians, "For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again to my necessities" (Phil. iv. 15-17). (3) He had to supplement these occasional gifts by "working with his own hands." Every Jew had to learn a trade. The apostle thus dignifies common industry.—T. C.

Vers. 10-12.—*Appeal alike to man and to God respecting his personal and his official work at Thessalonica.* This double appeal attests his profound sincerity.

I. CONSIDER HIS PERSONAL DEPORTMENT. "Ye are witnesses, and God, how holily, and justly, and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you that believe." He touches on the twofold relationship of the Christian life toward God and toward man, for he had always exercised himself "to have a conscience void of offence toward man and God," and strove "to give no offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed" (Acts xxvi. 16; 2 Cor. vi. 3). He had striven to walk circumspectly in a world prone to suspect sinister ends even in the best of men. The apostle's walk was on high, even as his calling was high.

II. CONSIDER HIS OFFICIAL DEPORTMENT. It was manifest in his method of dealing with his converts, and in the end which he kept steadily in view in all his ministry. 1. *His method of dealing with his converts.* "As ye know how we exhorted and comforted, and testified to each one of you as a father doth his children." (1) Mark the varieties in his mode of dealing with his converts. (a) He exhorted them, for their position of persecution and temptation demanded that he "should give them much exhortation" (Acts xx. 2). (b) He comforted them, in the presence of many disquieting circumstances in their condition. (c) He testified to them, exhibiting gospel truth with all urgency. (2) Mark the affectionate spirit of his dealing with them: "As a father doth his children;" for he combined a father's unwearying love with his power of direction and authority. (3) Mark the individualizing interest in their welfare: "Each one of you." Whether they were rich or poor, few or many, he passed by none of them. They all had a place in his heart. 2. *The aim of all his affectionate and individualizing interest in their welfare.* "That you would walk worthy of God, who calleth you into his kingdom and glory." The duty here enjoined, "Walk worthy of God." This implies (1) conformity to his revealed will; (2) adornment of the gospel by a holy walk; (3) supreme regard to the obligations involved in the high calling of God—these being necessitated by (a) the nature of the call, which is not external, but spiritual; (b) by the consideration of him who calls us; (c) by the holy ends of the call; (d) by the consideration of their high destiny: for they are called to "his own

kingdom and glory." This kingdom is that which is established in the mediation of Christ, into which we enter by the gate of regeneration, and which reaches its full and final development in the second coming of Christ. The glory is that which he impresses upon his people here, and which receives its full manifestation hereafter.—T. C.

Vers. 13.—The Thessalonian reception of the truth. The apostle had spoken of his own part in the work of grace; he now speaks of the manner in which his converts accepted the truth. "Ye are my witnesses; now I am yours." His immediate ground of thankfulness was that they had received, not man's word, but God's, and that the Word was so thoroughly efficacious. "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received not the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God."

I. THEY APPRECIATED THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE WORD OF MEN AND THE WORD OF GOD. 1. *They first heard it no doubt with interest and docility of spirit.* "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." The Word was not read but heard in the preaching of the apostles; it was no discovery of their own mind. 2. *They received it as an external fact made known to them by man.* 3. *They welcomed it with the inner acceptance of faith.* It was "mixed with faith in them that heard it" (Heb. iv. 2). It was "the joy and the rejoicing of their heart" (Jer. xv. 16). 4. *Their glad acceptance of it was conditioned upon its Divine origin.* It was not man's word, representing a new speculation in philosophy or ethics; it was "the Word of God" (Rom. x. 14). It was therefore (1) an infallible Word; (2) bearing the impress of Divine authority; (3) and therefore to be received with reverence and love.

II. THEY MANIFESTED THE POWER OF THE TRUTH IN THEIR LIVES. "Which effectually worketh also in you that believe." 1. *This effectual operation is conditioned upon their faith.* "The Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it" (Heb. iv. 2). The gospel is only to the believer "the power of God to salvation" (Rom. i. 16). 2. *Its power was manifest in quickening, enlightening, sanctifying, and comforting* under all afflictions and persecutions.—T. C.

Vers. 14-16.—The evidence of the effectual working of the Divine Word. They were able to imitate the patience and constancy of the Judæan Churches under great persecutions. These Churches were referred to probably because they were the oldest Churches, and the most severely persecuted.

I. IT IS A HIGH HONOUR AS WELL AS PRIVILEGE FOR CHURCHES TO BE SELECTED AS PATTERNS OF PATIENCE TO OTHER CHURCHES. "For ye, brethren, became followers of the Churches of God which in Judæa are in Christ Jesus." We are first to be imitators of Christ, then of all who follow in his steps, who keep on "looking to Jesus" (Heb. xii. 2). There were many Churches in Judæa, for Christianity was founded by Jews; its first converts were Jews; its first martyrs were Jews; and the Churches among them rejoiced in the fellowship of Christ, as the Source of their life and comfort.

II. THE PATH OF THE THESSALONIANS WAS ONE OF SEVERE TRIAL AND CONTINUOUS PERSECUTION. "For ye also have suffered like things from your own countrymen, even as they from the Jews." 1. *They had received the Word "in much affliction."* (Ch. i. 6.) The first outbreak of violence against them occurred after their conversion (Acts xvii. 5). They belonged to one of those Churches of Macedonia of which the apostle long afterwards wrote to the Corinthians as "enduring a great trial of affliction." It came from their heathen countrymen. 2. *Their trials attested the genuineness of their conversion.* The heathen would have had no quarrel with a dead faith. The Thessalonians did not "sleep as did others." They discovered by sharp experience that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. iii. 12). 3. *Their trials involved the precious experience of a "fellowship in Christ's sufferings."* (Phil. iii. 10.) 4. *Their trials manifested at once the strength of their faith and their Christian constancy.*

III. IT WAS SOME COMFORT TO THE THESSALONIANS TO KNOW THAT THEY WERE NOT THE ONLY SUFFERERS FROM THE FURY OF PERSECUTORS. "Even as they have of the Jews: who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and drave us out." This terrible invective against the Jews illustrates the saying that the apostle often "goes off at a word." It recalls the language of Stephen before his murderers (Acts vii. 52). The malignity of the Jews against their believing countrymen was

extreme. 1. *The Jews were murderers of Jesus and the prophets.* Though the Saviour was executed by the Romans, the responsibility of the terrible deed rests on the Jews, who "for envy" delivered him up, and "killed the Prince of life." They likewise killed their own prophets, whose very sepulchres they afterwards built and garnished. What wonder, then, that the Thessalonian converts should escape! 2. *The Jews, though zealous for God, did not please him.* "They pleased not God," but rather provoked him to anger by their unbelief and their wickedness. 3. *They were at cross-purposes with all mankind.* They were "contrary to all men." They were anti-social, exclusive, and bitter, so that the heathen Tacitus could describe them as "holding an attitude of hostility and hatred to the human race." But it was specially manifest in their resistance to the calling of the Gentiles—"forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved." The Acts of the Apostles supply abundant evidence of this fact. 4. *The end to which all this wickedness toward God and man was tending.* "To fill up their sins at all times." (1) God often allows nations to complete the sum of their wickedness before bringing upon them final retribution. "The iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full" (Gen. xv. 16). (2) The judgment upon the Jews was at hand—"but the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost." "There is now nothing between it and them." The destruction of Jerusalem was still future, but "the days of vengeance were already come." The fire was already burning, which would never be quenched till the vengeance was complete. The apostle seems to regard the moment of the rejection of the Messiah as marking the outpouring of the Divine wrath. The history of the Jews from that moment is a significant commentary on the passage.—T. C.

Vers. 17, 18.—*The apostle's anxiety to visit the Thessalonians.* His departure had been very sudden, but he had never ceased to regret his separation from them.

I. HIS GRIEF AT THE SEVERANCE OF PERSONAL INTERCOURSE WITH THEM. "But we, brethren, being bereaved of you for a short season in presence, not in heart." The term is expressive of the orphan-feeling felt by children deprived of their parents, or of parents bereaved of their children. He seems to say like Jacob, "If I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved." 1. *His grief was a proof of his deep affection for them.* Grace intensifies all right human affections. 2. *Absence, instead of weakening, rather strengthened his desire to see them again face to face.* Neither time nor distance could diminish his interest in them.

II. THE SEPARATION WAS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED BY SEVERAL ATTEMPTS TO REVISIT THEM. "We endeavoured the more exceedingly to see your face with great desire." The difficulties were great, but he tried once and again to get back to Thessalonica, probably in the period when Silas and Timothy were temporarily gone from him.

III. THE OBSTACLES TO HIS RETURN. "But Satan hindered us." 1. *The apostle believed in the existence of a personal evil spirit* as well as in his steadfast resistance to the kingdom of God in all its interests. He was "not ignorant of Satan's devices." 2. *The obstacles may have arisen through Satan inciting evil men to raise conflicts and tribulations round the apostle,* so as to allow of no leisure for the projected visit.

IV. THE GROUND OF HIS ANXIETY TO REVISIT THEM. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye before our Lord Jesus at his coming?" He did not desire to have his labour in vain. 1. *They were closely identified with his own future honour and happiness,* by the hope that they would not be "ashamed at Christ's coming," but would be "his joy and crown of rejoicing." He would then "rejoice in the day of Christ that he had not run in vain, neither laboured in vain" (Phil. ii. 15, 16). Therefore he longed to be near to them that "he might impart to them some spiritual gift," and watch over the walk of his spiritual children. 2. *His wish implies* (1) that there will be degrees of glory in heaven according to the measures of a minister's usefulness; (2) that he will be able to identify his converts in heaven.—T. C.

Vers. 1—12.—*The characteristics of St. Paul's preaching at Thessalonica.* I. APPEAL TO THE RECOLLECTION OF THE THESSALONIANS. 1. *His first appearance among them had not been in vain.* Others had borne witness to its results. That testimony was true;

the Thessalonians knew it themselves. The apostle appeals to them in all the confidence of Christian simplicity. Perfectly sincere and single-hearted himself, he knew that as a body they had appreciated the purity of his motives. They could bear testimony (he knew that they would gladly do so) that his preaching from the beginning had not been empty talk, but full of energy and life and fire. It is a blessed thing, this mutual confidence between a pastor and his flock. 2. *His previous sufferings had not abated his zeal.* He had been cruelly treated at Philippi; he bore the marks of the lictors' rods when he entered Thessalonica. It did not damp his ardour. His Lord had endured the cross, despising the shame, for the joy that was set before him. For the same joy, the great joy of saving souls, St. Paul was content to suffer, and, if need be, to die. Troubles soon came upon him in Thessalonica. He preached amid much conflict, but he was full of courage. 3. *His courage was of God.* We were bold in our God. It was he who gave them boldness, he who taught them what to speak; they felt that it was not they, but the Spirit of God who spoke in them. They abode in him, in his encompassing, irradiating presence, within the sphere of his gracious influence; hence came their utterance, their boldness of speech. 4. *For their gospel (our gospel, he calls it in ch. i. 5) was the gospel of God.* They were the messengers, but he had given the message. It was his glad tidings; it came from him, and it brought tidings of him, of his will, of his justice, of his love; it told men of a Creator, a Saviour, a Sanctifier. It was a high mission to preach that blessed gospel; the sense of its unspeakable preciousness inspired their burning words.

II. WHAT THEIR PREACHING WAS NOT. The Jews had tried to poison the minds of the Thessalonians against the apostle; they imputed low, earthly motives to him. St. Paul repudiates their insinuations. 1. *There was no mixture of selfish motive.* Their preaching was not of error or of deceit. They were not deceived themselves, they did not deceive others. They did not belong to the crowd of wandering impostors like Simon Magus, or Elymas the sorcerer. They knew certainly the truth of their mission. St. Paul had seen the Lord; what he delivered to the Thessalonians he had first received of the Lord. He knew this from the sure evidence of experience. His own truthfulness was manifest; the mighty change that had come over his life, the greatness of his sacrifices proved it. There was no uncleanness (as, perhaps, some of his enemies maliciously suggested), no impurity of any kind, attaching to his exhortation or his conduct. None who knew him could charge him with such things. But a life of self-sacrifice for the sake of souls was unexampled. He was the first missionary who had traversed Asia Minor, and now came to Europe for that lofty purpose. The mass of men, whether Jews or heathens, could not understand his noble character; it was high above them. They judged him by themselves. They were incapable of such self-denial for the sake of others; they could not believe in it; they had no faith in love, in purity, in high religious motive. Such a life, too, if real, if genuine, was a rebuke to them. It angered them. They could not bear to think of its contrast with their own life; it was like light and darkness. And so they believed, or forced themselves to believe, that it was not genuine. A true life like St. Paul's seemed to them above human nature—impossible, inexplicable. And they said that it was not true; they attributed his actions to vulgar motives, to low selfish designs. 2. *There was no covetousness.* His life was not one of pretences, fair words serving to conceal the covetousness which (so said his enemies) was his real motive. But his treasure was in heaven. He had suffered the loss of all things for Christ. He had in him a hidden treasure, a pearl of great price, for which he was content to count all else as loss. He could not covet earthly gold who had the true riches. But he had to endure this among other slanders. It was said of him at Corinth (2 Cor. xii. 17; vii. 2). He was obliged to take with him delegates of the Churches to assist him in the administration of alms, that he might avoid blame (2 Cor. viii. 20, 21). What a sad proof of the meanness of human nature that such a motive should be attributed to such a man! 3. *There was no desire of glory.* They did not seek to please men, but God. They knew that God tried the hearts, and, knowing that, they sought only to approve their inner and outer life to him. We labour, said St. Paul (2 Cor. v. 9), it is our ambition to be well pleasing unto him. God had proved them; he had entrusted them with the gospel. It was a high privilege. St. Paul counted it so; he magnified his office. He sought for nothing else. The great work of winning souls was, he well knew, of all works the

highest and the noblest. God was proving their hearts now. He, the Searcher of hearts, knew their work through and through. He knew the inner life of thought and motive, as well as the outer life of word and action. They fully recognized this great truth. They knew that their motives were pure and unselfish. God knew it too. It was all they wanted. They sought not praise of men. They had no pleasure in flattery; they did not flatter others. That the Thessalonians knew. God knew the purity of their motives. "God is witness," they could say. How blessed that life must be which could thus appeal to his all-seeing eye! They were apostles of Christ; St. Paul in the highest sense, Silvanus and Timotheus in the more extended meaning of the word. St. Paul may, indeed, be using the plural number of himself only; more probably in this place he includes his companions. They might have claimed honour for themselves; they might have made men feel the weight of their apostolic dignity. But they sought not glory from men. They had overcome that temptation which is so strong in most men, the "last infirmity of noble minds," the desire of earthly glory.

III. WHAT THEIR PREACHING WAS. 1. *They were gentle.* There is very strong manuscript evidence for *ἡμεῖς*, babes. If that is the true reading, St. Paul means that their character was one of childlike simplicity, free from selfish motives; they were babes in malice, but men in understanding (1 Cor. xiv. 20). But "gentle" suits the context better. "The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men." St. Paul adduces the most touching type of human tenderness—the nursing mother cherishing her own children, warming them in her bosom. Such had been his gentleness among his children after the faith. He had sought to win them by gentle words. He had told them of the gentleness of Christ. He had set before them the attractive picture of the Saviour's tender love. Gentleness wins more hearts than sternness. The apostle knew the terrors of the Lord. He could remind his converts of the awful things beyond the grave. "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." But he knew that love is a more powerful motive than fear. "Perfect love casteth out fear." The cross of Jesus Christ draweth all men to the Saviour, because it is the manifestation of that love that passeth knowledge—the love of Jesus Christ. 2. *They were actuated by the strong love of souls.* The Thessalonians had become very dear to them. They had not known them long, but they recognized them as sheep of that little flock which the Lord Jesus bids those who love him to feed for his love's sake. Thus loving them, they were affectionately desirous of their salvation. They were ready to give them not only the blessed gospel, but their own selves, their own lives, in humble imitation of the good Shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep. They had exposed themselves to the greatest dangers for the work's sake; for that work they were ready, if need be, to die. The love of souls is the essential requisite for real success in the sacred work of the ministry. Other qualifications may win the praise of men; but the true work of winning souls can be wrought only by those who have learned from the blessed Saviour something of that holy love which burned in the sacred heart of Jesus. 3. *They were absolutely disinterested.* They would not be burdensome to their new converts. The Philippian Church had twice sent help to the apostle during his residence at Thessalonica (Phil. iv. 16). That help he had accepted; it was unasked, freely given. He welcomed it for the sake of the givers, as an evidence of their love. But the gifts, though very precious as a proof of Christian charity, were probably small in themselves; the Philippian Church was very poor. It seems also to have been a season of scarcity; times were bad. The missionaries had to labour for their livelihood. St. Paul's craft, weaving tent-cloth of goats' hair, was hard, wearisome, ill-paid work. He had to labour night and day. Yet he achieved those great results. He had but the sabbath to himself. Three sabbath days he spent in reasoning with the Jews, and preaching Jesus in the synagogue at Thessalonica; other days he had to work, to work hard and long, for his daily bread. The Greeks despised manual labour; they called it vulgar; they left such work to slaves. The apostle teaches by his own example the dignity of honest labour, the dignity of true Christian independence. Probably the Thessalonians could have helped him. "Not a few of the chief women" had become Christians. They must, one thinks, have been willing. St. Paul must have had reasons for declining their aid, as he afterwards declined the aid of the Corinthians (2 Cor. xi. 9, 10). How these thoughts increase our admiration of the great apostle! Amid all these difficulties, all these cares, all this engrossing labour, he preached with power, with perseverance,

with success such as only an ardent love of souls, only the presence of God the Holy Ghost, could give. 4. *They set a high example.* The Thessalonians saw their outward life; God could read the secrets of their hearts. That life was pure and holy towards God, just and righteous in its relations to men. The Christians of Thessalonica knew that they were blameless. Others might, perhaps, be busy with their iniquations; unbelievers might suggest this or that unworthy motive. The Christians had learned to know St. Paul and his companions. They knew the sincerity, the purity of their lives. Nay, St. Paul could fearlessly appeal to a higher Witness—to the all-seeing God. Example is a mighty aid in preaching the gospel. Deeds are more persuasive than words. A holy life is an evidence of the reality of those spiritual facts which the preacher describes in words. 5. *They taught their converts individually.* They were not contented with preaching in the synagogues every sabbath day; they taught from house to house. The converts were many, we read in the Acts of the Apostles. Chrysostom wonders at their zeal in omitting no one in so great a multitude. They sought out each, caring for each separate soul, sharing the angels' joy over one sinner that repenteth. They tried all means of winning souls. They exhorted, stirring the souls of men with burning words, suggesting nobler views of human life and destiny; they comforted, encouraging the afflicted, the despondent, the penitent, by the glad tidings of pardon, peace, and hope; they testified, urging their converts by every constraining motive to persevere in the Christian life. And all this they did with such earnestness, with such affectionate interest, with such love as a father shows towards his own children. A bright example of the pastor's work. 6. *The purport of their exhortation.* God was calling them; they must walk worthily of that high calling. He was calling them into his kingdom now, into the kingdom which Christ had come to found—his Church. They had become children of the kingdom. He was calling them higher yet, to his glory, to the beatific vision, that the Saviour's prayer might be fulfilled, "I will that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." Their walk in life must show the reality of their hope. Walk implies movement, change of place and scene. As they move hither and thither in the course of their daily lives, in their business, in their amusements, they must ever think of that high calling, and live according to their hopes. Their religion was not to be confined to the sabbath, to the synagogue, to the hours spent on their knees in private prayer; they must carry it everywhere with them; it must guide, stimulate, comfort, encourage in all the varying circumstances of daily life. Their life must be worthy of their calling. They must show its influence; they must adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things.

LESSONS. 1. Study the lives of St. Paul and other holy men. 2. Let not that study end in admiration; act upon it. 3. In such lives is seen the manifest workings of the grace of God. 4. The sight of such lives confirms the faith of the wavering, kindles the desire of the lukewarm. 5. True Christians are the light of the world: they must let their light shine before men. 6. But not for their own glory; they must seek only the glory of God.—B. C. C.

Vers. 13-16.—*The effects of the gospel.* I. ITS RECEPTION BY THE THESSALONIANS. 1. *They believed that it came from God.* Paul and Silas and Timotheus brought the message; the Thessalonians recognized it as the message of God. They felt that it came from him. (1) Their words were such as never man untaught of God could speak. The gospel was utterly unlike anything that had been heard or read before. It stood alone, unique, separate from all other histories. No human imagination could have pictured it; no human genius could have thought it out. It must be of God; it could have no other source. It bore within itself the evidence of its inspiration, of its Divine origin. And (2) they felt its energy within their hearts. It did not lie dormant there; it was living and powerful. It wrought within them with a mighty working, drawing them by a strange constraining power away from their old self-pleasing lives into the new life of faith and love and self-denial. That living force showed that it was the Word of God. No mere human words could so stir the heart. The preaching of the cross might be a stumbling-block to the Jews, it might seem foolishness to the Greeks; but to those who had the precious gift of faith, it was "the power of God and the wisdom of God." 2. *They showed their faith by their works.* The infant European

Churches imitated the oldest Churches, those of Judæa. All alike belonged to God; all were in Christ Jesus, living branches in the true Vine. The new converts sought to live like the first Christians. "Then had the Churches rest throughout all Judæa and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of God, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied." They imitated them in active holiness, and they imitated them in patient endurance.

II. THE OPPOSITION OF THE WORLD. 1. *The Gentile opposition.* It first appeared in Macedonia. In Philippi the evangelists were for the first time brought before Gentile magistrates. The politarchs of Thessalonica had more sense of justice than the so-called prætors of Philippi. They contented themselves with taking security from the Christians who were brought before them. But the converts were exposed to great persecution in both places from the first. In his letters to both Churches, St. Paul again and again mentions their sufferings. In writing to the Corinthians he speaks of the "great trial of affliction" which beset the Macedonian Christians. The Thessalonians had to suffer much at the hands of their own countrymen. But they had been taught that those who would live a godly life must suffer persecution, and so they thought it not strange. It had been so from the beginning of Christianity. They looked to the example of the earliest Churches. 2. *The Jewish opposition.* The Jews had slain the prophets; they had slain the Lord Jesus; they had chased the apostle from city to city. They were St. Paul's own countrymen. He loved them dearly. He could find no words strong enough to express his intense longing for their salvation (see Rom. ix. 1—3). But they were constantly thwarting his work—that work of saving souls on which his whole heart was set. They were doing so now at Corinth, opposing themselves and blaspheming (Acts xviii. 6). St. Paul could not restrain his feelings of holy indignation. They call themselves (he says) the peculiar people of God; but they please him not. He willeth that all men should be saved, and they are contrary to all men. In that hatred of the human race which heathen writers attribute to them, they tried to hinder the apostle from preaching to the Gentiles. Nothing angered them more than the proclamation of a free salvation offered to Jew and Gentile alike (see Acts xxii. 21, 22). This wicked jealousy filled up the measure of their sins. Their sin was its own punishment. That hardened heart was the beginning of the judgment that was coming.

Learn: 1. To reverence the Gospel as the Word of God. 2. To look for its inner working in the heart. 3. To imitate the saints of God in patient endurance.—B. C. C.

Vers. 17—20.—*St. Paul's love for his converts.* I. *HIS LONGING DESIRE TO SEE THEM.* 1. *His efforts to return to Thessalonica.* He had not been long away. He was at Corinth now. Perhaps the jealousies, the dissensions, the sin which encompassed him there made him long all the more for the simple faith and love of his Macedonian friends. He was with them even now in heart, thinking of them in the hour of prayer, remembering them in his thankgivings. But there was a feeling of bereavement, almost of desolation, when he thought of their absence. So very dear they had become to him during the short time which he spent at Thessalonica. We feel, as we read these words, the depth of St. Paul's affection; we feel the power of Christian love. 2. *What hindered him from coming.* It was Satan, Satan the adversary—that awful being whose presence in God's world is so great a mystery, but whose personality is so clearly taught in Holy Scripture, whose power and malice we have all so often felt. Twice the apostle purposed to revisit Thessalonica; twice the hindrance came. The visit would have given him great comfort. Satan envied him that comfort, that sweet communion with his Christian friends. Satan hinders us, we may be sure. He tries to rob us of the consolations of religion, of the sweetness of Christian sympathy. His agency is more widespread than we think. He is the accuser of the brethren, their adversary in the religious life. But God sitteth on high. He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able. He will make all things, even the temptations of the evil one, work together for our good if we abide in his love.

II. *HIS EXPRESSIONS OF AFFECTION.* 1. *They are his glory and his joy.* They are so now. He had few joys in this world, few earthly comforts. His life was spent in hard labour amid dangers and privations. It was relieved by very few pleasures. The natural beauty, the historical associations of the places which he visited in his travels,

seem to have given him no enjoyment. His one joy was to save souls; his one pleasure was the loving sympathy of his converts. He sought no earthly glory; fame was nothing to him. The souls won to Christ by his preaching were his glory. 2. *They would be his crown at the last.* Not they only, others saved by his preaching at Damascus, at Antioch, in Cyprus, in Asia Minor, were his hope and joy; but none were more tenderly loved than the Christians of Macedonia, none are addressed with more endearing words. He ever looked forward to the coming of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; the great day was always in his thoughts. What joy would it be to present these happy souls to Christ, as a chaste virgin to the heavenly bridegroom! This was his hope; this would be his crown—the crown of glory that fadeth not away, which the chief Shepherd shall give in that day to those faithful presbyters who have fed the flock of God willingly and of a ready mind, being themselves ensamples to the flock.

LESSONS. 1. True Christians will delight in the society of those like-minded with themselves. 2. We must remember the restless energy of Satan. We must trust in God. He is stronger than the strong man armed. 3. We must pray for grace to love the saints of God as St. Paul loved them.—B. C. C.

Vers. 1—12.—*The manner of the preachers; or, self-portraiture.* I. WHAT THE THESSALONIANS HAD FOUND THEIR PREACHING TO BE. 1. *Not void of power.* "For yourselves, brethren, know our entering in unto you, that it hath not been found vain." "For" goes back to the first of the two divisions given at the close of the previous chapter. This is indicated by the recurrence of the leading Greek word translated "entering in." It was said, "For they themselves report concerning us what manner of entering in we had unto you." There is an advance to a further point. Not only did the people in the various places report, but they *themselves* had the evidences in their possession. The evidences are regarded as extending down to the time of the Thessalonian letter being received. Taken hold of at that moment, and addressed as brethren, they are asked this question, "What has the entering in of us preachers been found to be?" And, having had ample time to estimate the entering in, they are confidently expected to give this testimony, "It hath not been found vain." The epithet "vain" might mean empty of result; but that thought falls under the second division, which is taken up at ver. 13. It must, therefore, mean empty of all that it ought causally to contain—empty of purpose, and earnestness, in a word, of evangelical power. 2. *Characterized by fortitude.* "But having suffered before, and been shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we waxed bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God in much conflict." This is so far confirmed by the Acts of the Apostles, where the narrative of the entering in to Thessalonica is immediately preceded by the narrative of the rough treatment received at Philippi. The feature of the suffering before referred to here is there presented as imprisonment. It was imprisonment with aggravated circumstances. Paul and Silas were *dragged* into the market-place before the magistrates, by whose orders they were beaten with *rods*. After *many* stripes had been laid on them they were cast into the *inner* prison, and their feet made fast in the *stocks*. This was *shameful treatment*, not because they were there in Philippi on an errand of mercy, which heathen magistrates could not appreciate, but because their rights were not respected. It was an irregularity to lay stripes on them at all as Roman citizens. It was a further irregularity to punish so hastily in obedience to clamour, and without an opportunity of defence being granted. All this was known to the Thessalonians. So far the statement here supplements the narrative in the Acts of the Apostles. We read, further, that Timothy accompanied Paul from Lystra, and again that he was left behind at Berea, but there is nothing said of him in the interval. We learn from this notice that he was co-operating with Paul and Silas both in Philippi and in Thessalonica, although, we may understand, not so prominent an object of attack as the others, who were his seniors both in age and in service. The three were not intimidated by this treatment in Philippi. On the contrary, proceeding to Thessalonica, they waxed bold in their God to speak unto the Thessalonians the gospel of God. It was the gospel of God, inasmuch as it came as a glad message from God. They looked to God as *their* God, who had commissioned them to deliver his message. As commissioned by God to deliver his message, they did not flee, like Jonah, through fear, but they emboldened themselves in their God, that he would give them his protection and support. It did

not fare with them in Thessalonica differently from what it did in Philippi. Their message brought them into conflict with the powers of unbelief. It was a conflict of a formidable nature. But the fact that they were able to stand forth and speak the gospel of God in the face of strong opposition was evidence of the very highest value that their entering in to Thessalonica was not vain.

II. THEIR GENERAL HABIT AS PREACHERS. 1. *They were not like the idolatrous priests.* (1) *They did not preach out of error.* "For our exhortation is not of error." There was not much of what is here called exhortation in the ministrations of the idolatrous priests. They did not lay themselves out to influence men by suasion to what was considered to be the right belief and the right life. The old translation in this place, "deceit," was objectionable. Such men were not impostors to begin with. They believed in their system. It was what they had received by tradition from their fathers. Nevertheless it was a system of error, literally, "wandering." Heathenism was a wandering from God, whether objects of worship were sought in the stony world, in the silence of vegetable life, behind the hieroglyphics of the brute creation, or behind the human form. Out of such error they ministered to man. Paul and his companions, on the other hand, ministered out of truth. They had the true conception of God and of human life. Their exhortation had its *inspiring cause* in Christianity. As moved themselves by its soul-cheering truth, they sought to move others. (2) *They did not preach out of uncleanness.* "Nor of uncleanness." This was the general character of heathen ministrations, but, as denied here, it would seem, from the context, to refer more particularly to the impure love of gain. Those who ministered in heathen temples were in the habit of receiving gifts from the worshippers. And there was the danger, and, in the absence of better influences, the likelihood of gain becoming the end, in which their ministrations had motive power. This was not the end in which the apostle and his companions found motive for their way of exhortation. (3) *They did not resort to unworthy methods in preaching.* "Nor in guile." Heathen priests could not but be conscious of much imposture. Conscious of no inflatus, of no extraordinary knowledge possessed by them, they yet professed to tell the future from the position of the stars, from the flight of birds, from the entrails of animals. They had to do with unrealities in many forms, in order to keep up their influence with the worshippers. The apostle and his companions, as their end was the salvation of souls, so they only sought it by the use of means which their conscience could approve. 2. *They realized their responsibility.* "But even as we have been approved of God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God which proveth our hearts." There are *two ideas* in a trust. The first is *acting for another*. He who makes over the trust does not act himself by reason of *death*, or by reason of *infirmity*, or by reason of *absence* (as in the analogy that is made use of in Luke xix. 12). The trustee—he to whom the trust is made over—acts in his name and for his interest. The second idea is *acting apart by one's self*. The trustee may have directions to guide him, and ample resources to draw upon in the management of the trust. But otherwise he acts independently. He is left there alone with the trust; in responsibility it is his and not another's if it is managed well; it is his and not another's if it is mismanaged. (1) *What their trust was.* "*So we speak.*" A minister must not be devoid of thoughts, and must also be able to give clear expression to them. He has also to stand up before his fellow-men, and to *speak* to them face to face with a practical aim. That, with the speaking of which he is intrusted, is the gospel. "The gospel of the glory of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust." The gospel is properly the glad tidings of salvation to all people. It begins with the message of pardon to the guilty, of adoption into the family of God of the disowned and disinherited. It is, in its gladsome breadth, the promise of the communication of the Divine life and happiness to our being. It is this which the minister has to speak with a view to its acceptance. It is not meant that he is only to speak this. For he has the whole Bible to open up as he can. He has other important truth to present, even the terrors of the Law in its bearing on the gospel. Neither is he to confine himself in his illustrations to the Bible. For as all roads led to Rome, so all things can legitimately and usefully be made to lead to the gospel. Only nothing is to be dilated upon or brought in which has not the effect of making prominent the gospel proper, or the glad message from God to man. (2) *Their being chosen for the trust.* "*As we have been approved*

of God." "It was requisite," it has been said of the Athenian priesthoods, "that all priests should be of legitimate birth, without bodily defect, and of unblamable life and conversation. These particulars were ascertained by a *dokimasia*." It cannot be said of all who are in the office of the ministry that they have received the Divine approval. There must be a certain aptitude in natural gifts for preaching the gospel. * There must especially be aptitude in the moral state of the preacher. God has seen fit, by saved men, to save men. He employs, in the preaching of the gospel, those who have sympathy with the gospel. In this light Paul and Silas and Timothy were no pretenders, but had received the Divine stamp—had been pronounced fit, from their gifts and experiences, to be employed in the saving of souls. (3) *The spirit in which they fulfilled their trust. Danger they avoided.* This was *man-pleasing*. There is a certain pleasing of men which is not to be avoided by the preacher of the gospel. He is to seek to interest men by all legitimate methods. But this pleasing cannot be exalted into a *law universal*. We are not to please men as though we were responsible to them. We are not to please men as though we had to consult their false tastes, their natural dislike to the gospel. On the contrary, all man-pleasing is to be repudiated where it interferes with the main design of the gospel, which is to effect a change upon the heart. *Excellence they cultivated.* This was *God-pleasing*. This is a safe rule to follow in every case. For he is infinite excellence, and he who seeks to please him follows no low or variable standard. It is the fit thing to do in the position in which we are placed. He has entrusted us preachers with the gospel; it is therefore simply our duty to please him who has given us so solemn a trust. If we have been approved of God to be entrusted with the gospel, that is so far well. But there is an approval that we have to look forward to at the end of our labours. And shall it then be seen that we have stood the test? Shall we then receive the word of approval, "Well done, good and faithful servant"? Paul and Silas and Timothy claimed that, in accordance with the fact of their having been approved, they spake pleasing God. And this is heightened by the consideration that God is regarded as proving their hearts. They preached as under the eye of the heart-trying God. They preached as if asking God to remove from their hearts all that unfitted them for dealing with the gospel. They preached with some consciousness in the depth of their being that their single aim was to find acceptance for the good message.

III. THEIR HABIT TOWARD THE THESSALONIANS. 1. *Denial of selfishness.* (1) *In the form of flattery.* "For neither at any time were we found using words of flattery, as ye know." In proof of what was their general habit, an appeal is made to what their habit was particularly toward the Thessalonians. At no time were they found using speech whose contents were flattery. Having denied generally the method of deceit, they now deny, toward the Thessalonians, the method of flattery. It is a method commonly resorted to by deceivers. It may seem removed from selfishness, inasmuch as it is a way of pleasing men. In that respect it is not so odious as a habit of detraction. But the flatterer is essentially selfish. He professes affection he does not feel; he bestows praises beyond what he considers to be deserved. He thus goes against the person he seeks to flatter, who has a *right* to have presented to him what a man really is, and not what he assumes to be—a true face, and not a mask. And he further goes against him, inasmuch as he would have him think of himself as different from what he really is. Paul and his companions were not slow to let the real affection of their heart be known, and to bestow praises where they were deserved. But they disclaimed flattery, appealing, in support of their truthfulness in doing so, to the experience of the Thessalonians. (2) *In the form of covetousness.* "Nor a cloak of covetousness, God is witness." The idea of deceit is carried forward in the word "cloak." It is something worn under which, or, to keep nearer to the Greek word, "woven before" ("pretext"), behind which the real design is concealed. Covetousness is doubly degrading in connection with sacred service. It is laid down as one of the qualifications of a minister that he is not to be greedy of filthy lucre. Paul and his companions did not use great profession of godliness, or of affection and esteem for the Thessalonians, as a pretext for getting their money. They were conscious to their own minds of purity in this matter, and, feeling the vast importance of being thoroughly cleared from such an imputation, they solemnly call God to witness that they were stating the truth. This form of confirmation—"God is witness"—approaching to the oath, is only to be used in a matter

of great moment, and especially where hidden motive is concerned. (3) *In the form of a desire for honour.* "Nor seeking glory of men, neither from you, nor from others, when we might have been burdensome, as apostles of Christ." This is an alternative to covetousness. Following the method of deceit, they might have been seeking, not money; but glory. Christ says, "I receive not glory from men." And he declares this to be an obstacle to believing. "How can ye believe, which receive glory one of another, and the glory that cometh from the only God ye seek not?" Paul and his companions had not sought glory which had its origin in men, neither more immediately from them nor from others. They had not done this when, as the meaning would seem to be, they might have claimed honour as the apostles of Christ. The idea of "burdensomeness" seems out of keeping with the immediate context, the preceding thought being "glory," and the succeeding thought being "gentleness." It seems better, then, to adopt the other meaning which the words equally well bear: "When we might have claimed dignity, assumed consequence." They had an honourable status as apostles of Christ, that designation being taken widely. The honour connected with it came, not from men, but from Christ. It was a great honour to hold a commission from Christ. But they did not put forward their official position; they did not exact a recognition of it from men. 2. *On the positive side their motherly unselfishness.* "But we were gentle in the midst of you, as when a nurse cherisheth her own children: even so, being affectionately desirous of you, we were well pleased to impart unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were become very dear to us." So far from being mere officials taken up with their dignity, they were gentle in the midst of them. Their whole bearing in the midst of the Thessalonians was like that of a parent in the midst of his children. Nay, that does not suffice to bring out the nature of the gentleness. It is not the father who is taken; but, as expressing greater tenderness, the mother. In another place (Gal. iv. 19) Paul also makes use of the motherly: "My little children, of whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you." Here he not only takes the mother, but the mother at the time when she is nursing. As when a nurse cherisheth her own children. It is then that the motherly feeling is most active in her. It is then that she uses the sweetest expressions, holds her child with the greatest fondness and solicitude. But the nursing mother is not only the picture of gentleness; she is also the picture of *unselfishness*. She does not think of receiving from her child; she thinks only of giving. She gives from herself, and, if that child's life were in danger, she would not hesitate to give her own life. So the motherly was very active in them at Thessalonica. They were *affectionately desirous* of the Thessalonians. Desire has a certain contrary nature to affection. Desire draws in; affection gives out. It is giving out that is referred to here. It would seem, therefore, better to translate, "Having a fond affection for you." In the working of this affection they gave to the Thessalonians the milk of the Word—here called the gospel of God—what was given them by the great and tender Giver to give to the new-born. And such was the unselfishness of their affection that they had the willingness, if it had been necessary, to give their very lives for the Thessalonians, because, in their craving for the Word, they were felt to be very dear. 3. *Striking exemplification of unselfishness.* "For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: working night and day, that we might not burden any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God." The apostle and his companions "practically gave up their existence" to the Thessalonians. Those addressed as brethren are called upon to call to mind the *labour and travail* undergone for them. The second word serves the purpose of intensification. There was giving out of strength in "heralding" the gospel of God. A herald does not spare himself; as gospel heralds they did not spare themselves in soul or body. This work of heralding was by itself labour and travail; but it was added to by the circumstances under which they heralded. They felt themselves under the necessity of working—Paul, no doubt, at the work of tent-making. That also was labour and travail; for it was night and day—as we would say, day and night; not completed with daylight, but extending into the night. There was no reason for his not receiving from the Philippians as he did at Thessalonica. There was reason for his not receiving from the Thessalonians. The reason given is, the desire not to burden any of them. His not feeling free to burden any of them, who ever determined it, raised him now above the suspicion of being covetous among them. He had only been a giver, like a nursing

mother. 4. *What their behaviour generally was toward the Thessalonians.* "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and righteously and unblamably we behaved ourselves toward you that believe." Their behaviour is defined as being toward the Thessalonians as believers. We may think of Paul as speaking for himself and his companions. How did he bear himself toward these believers? (1) *Holily*, i.e. with love and reverence toward God in them. (2) *Righteously*, i.e. with due consideration for their position. This must be taken to include their position as believers. There was what was suitable for them, as adopted into the family of God through faith. (3) *Unblamably*, a strong word which is used not infrequently by the apostle. It is the negative side of the two positions that have been given. Here there is a concentration of the self-praise, as it may seem, that pervades the paragraph. How could he act so holily and righteously toward the Thessalonians as to incur no blame from them or from God? But that is not all: he makes an appeal to them as witnesses, and, the second time in the paragraph, he makes a solemn appeal to God as Witness even of his inward disposition. It cannot be understood that he lays claim to perfection; for it is he who says in another place, "Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect." But it must be understood that he claimed to be sincere, and sincere in no ordinary degree, in seeking the good of the Thessalonians. In claiming this he was not really, praising himself; but he was making clear what was fitted to influence powerfully the Thessalonians in their fidelity to the gospel. He points to them as believers, because, it may be, they were fitted to appreciate the spirituality of his bearing. He points to them as believers, chiefly as showing that they worthily responded to what his bearing was. 5. *Their fatherly dealing.* There are frequent allusions to fatherhood in God in Scripture. One of the allusions to motherhood in God is in Isa. lxvi. 13, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." Both meet in God, forming a complete conception.

"No earthly father loves like thee,
No mother e'er so mild."

So they must meet in the servant of God. Paul has already in this paragraph referred to himself as acting the motherly part; he now supplements it by referring to himself as acting the fatherly part. (1) *Individual dealing.* "As ye know how we dealt with each one of you, as a father dealeth with his own children." It is the part of a father to have his children under his eye. He is acquainted with their little histories and peculiar dispositions. And he does not deal with all alike, but studies their various ways, and deals with them accordingly. So it is the part of a minister not only to make a general declaration of the gospel, but also, father-like, to deal with his people individually, according to what he knows of their circumstances and needs. (2) *Three words descriptive of the nature of fatherly dealing.* "Exhorting you." It is the part of a father not merely to tell his children their duty, but also to exhort them, to urge them warmly to duty, especially from his own experiences of life. So it is the part of a minister not only to hold up Scripture precept for instruction, but also, father-like, warmly to recommend its observance, especially from his own spiritual experiences. "And encouraging you." It is the part of a father to hold out encouragement to the performance of duty. Nothing can be more fatal to the young than a discouraging tone. So it is the part of a minister not to be harsh, censorious, despondent, but, father-like, to catch a geniality and hopefulness from his message which may be said to have come from the fatherhood of God. "And testifying." The word can bear a stronger meaning—charging, conjuring. There are times when a father addresses his children as with his dying breath, conjures them by all that he counts dear and sacred, by a consideration of their best interests, not to give way to temptation, but to follow in the path of duty. So there are times when it is becoming for a minister to concentrate his earnestness and to address his people as with his dying breath, conjuring them by the authority of God, by the love of the Spirit, by the blood of Christ, by the dreadful issues at stake, by the solemnity of judgment, not to allow themselves to be cheated out of happiness, but to make sure of Christ as their everlasting Portion. (3) *To what the fatherly dealing is to be directed.* "To the end that ye should walk worthily of God, who calleth you into his own kingdom and glory." It is the part of a father to endeavour to hold the children to what is noble. For this purpose he loves to tell them

of the good name their family has borne, of the call which that addresses to them to follow out a good career. And so he exhorts, encourages, conjures them. Let them not stain that noble name, let them not stop short of that noble career. So it is the part of a minister, father-like, to tell his people of their high dignity and destiny, of their being called by God into his own kingdom, of their being called in that kingdom to share with God in his glory. And so he exhorts, encourages, conjures them. Let them prove worthy of having place and honour in God's kingdom. Let the *royal stamp* be on all their conduct.—R. F.

Vers. 13—16.—*Response of the Thessalonians to the proclamation of the gospel by Paul and his companions.* 1. THEIR ACCEPTANCE OF THE WORD. "And for this cause

we also thank God without ceasing, that when ye received from us the word of the message, even the Word of God, ye accepted it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the Word of God, which also worketh in you that believe." With this commences the second of the divisions indicated at the close of the first chapter. Our attention is turned away from the preachers to the hearers. It is confusing to join "also" to "we," and to suppose the meaning to be, with Lünemann, "We as well as every true Christian who hears of your conduct," or, with Ellicott, "We as well as you who have so much to be thankful for." It makes an easier transition to join "also" to "thank," making the subject of thanksgiving something additional to the earnestness of the preachers. We may translate freely, "Having this as an antecedent, we have this in addition as a consequent for which to thank God." Here, then, is a falling back into the thankful strain with which the Epistle commenced. The very word translated "without ceasing" is caught up. Having given out their strength in preaching, they had unceasing cause of thanksgiving to God in the result. In setting forth the result, the word is described from the point of view of the Thessalonians in relation to the preachers. The nearest translation is "the from-us-heard-word." This they received in the outward ordinance of preaching. Having thus received it, they next accepted it or received it into their inmost being. They gave this inner reception to it, as being, in their estimation, not the word of man. It was indeed delivered by men. It was a word of human salvation. In its very humanness it was fitted to reach men. But their estimation of the word rose above it as a mere human word to what it really was (as attested here), the Word of God. It was a Word given under Divine direction. It was a Word that came from the heart of God. It was a Word of the overflowing of Divine love. It was a Word, moreover, that was accompanied with the Divine efficacy. In harmony with its being the Divine Word, it is described as working in them that believe. Faith is the organ for our reception of the Word. We may receive the Divine Word in the outward ordinance of preaching, but if there is not this organ of inner reception it must remain inoperative. On the other hand, if there is faith, and in proportion as there is faith, does the mighty power of the word pass into us, even up to the full extent of our capacity and need. It is, therefore, our duty to see that we present no obstacle of unbelief to the efficacy of the Word in us. "That the Word may become effectual to salvation we must attend thereunto with diligence, preparation, and prayer; receive it with faith and love, lay it up in our hearts, and practise it in our lives."

II. THE ACCEPTED WORD WROUGHT IN THEM TO GIVE THEM CHRISTIAN HEROISM. "For ye, brethren, became imitators of the Churches of God which are in Judæa in Christ Jesus: for ye also suffered the same things of your own countrymen, even as they did of the Jews." There were, to appearance, other Churches of God in Judæa. It was, therefore, necessary to distinguish Christian Churches in Judæa. It is not to be understood that the Thessalonian Christians were designedly imitators of the Judæan Churches. In result they were imitators. In similar circumstances they exhibited a similar spirit. Judæa was notably the quarter where Christian heroism was most required. The Jews there were filled with deepest rancour against Christ. By their numbers they were more to be considered by the Roman power, and were able to go to greater lengths against the Christians. It could be said of the Thessalonian Christians that they were not behind the Judæan Churches in Christian heroism. They suffered the same things of their own countrymen. We are, therefore, to understand that they were subjected to severe persecution in Thessalonica. We know that the Jews had to do with the persecution as instigators, but, as they had little in their

power without the action of the Gentile authorities, their own countrymen are referred to as those at whose hands the Thessalonians suffered. A position was held for Christ at Thessalonica as in Judæa. And, in recording this to the praise of the Thessalonians, they warm toward them and address them as brethren.

III. FOR THEIR ENCOURAGEMENT IN HEROISM THE JEWS ARE PRESENTED IN THEIR TRUE CHARACTER. 1. *Their past conduct.* (1) *Worst manifestation.* "Who both killed the Lord Jesus." In the Greek the mind is first made to rest on the word "Lord." Then there is brought into neighbourhood and sharp contrast with it the word "killed." The "Lord" of the Old Testament Scriptures to whom Divine attributes are ascribed—whom David owned as his Lord—they did not own or submit to; but, going in the opposite direction as far as they could go, him they murdered. They did this not only to him who was the Impersonation of authority, but was also the Accomplisher of the loving, saving purpose of God. For "Jesus" is added as a third word. This the Jews did as a nation. They said in effect, through their constituted authorities, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him." In thus charging guilt home upon the Jews, Paul was charging it home upon himself. For wherever he was at the time of the crucifixion, in his then state of mind he was in full sympathy with the action of the rulers. And it is right that we should see here not only the blackness of the Jewish heart, but the blackness of the human heart. This was what we did to our Lord when he came on an errand of mercy to our earth. We laid hands on him and put him to death. For this let us be deeply humbled before God. Let us say with Job, in nearer contact with God, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (2) *Manifestations leading up to the worst.* "And the prophets." What the Jews did to their Messiah was not an isolated act. It was only of a piece with what their previous conduct had been. "Which of the prophets," said Stephen, "did not your fathers persecute? and they killed them which showed before of the coming of the Righteous One; of whom ye have now become betrayers and murderers." The treatment they gave to God's messengers, whose work it was to prepare the way for the Messiah by rebuke and prediction, led up to the treatment they gave their Messiah. In his pre-Christian state Paul was well entitled to be called "son of them that slew the prophets;" and so are all who abuse and thwart, or stand aloof from, those who are seeking to advance the cause of God in the world. (3) *Manifestation subsequent to the worst.* "And drove out us." The reference seems to be to the driving of the apostles out of Judæa. This was overruled by God for the proclamation of the gospel beyond Judæa; but none the less was it culpable. It showed that the spirit of penitence had not passed over them for the heinous crime of which they had been guilty. They were still holding to the words, "His blood be upon us, and upon our children." 2. *Condemnation of their conduct.* (1) *It was against God.* "And please not God." The Jews thought they were pleasing God in what they did to Christ and also to the prophets and apostles. This is denied of them. They were really, in their anti-Christian position, setting themselves against the Divine ends. They were setting themselves against the whole meaning of their existence as a nation, against the teaching of their oracles, against the design of their rites. They were setting themselves against the evidence of miracles, and against the stronger evidence of a goodness which should have carried conviction to every honest heart. If they could be so far mistaken, have not we reason to be on our guard? We may think that we are pleasing God when we have never learned the alphabet of the Divine teaching, have never subjected ourselves to the Divine control. (2) *It was against man.* "And are contrary to all men; forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved." Their condemnation manward is as strong as their condemnation Godward. *They were contrary to all men,* is the language used; and the proof which is given is conclusive. The gospel is the offer of salvation to *all men*. But the universality, which is its glory, was to them its defect. They had the idea of keeping salvation to themselves. They had the idea that they were blessed the more, the fewer they were that were blessed. And when the apostles spoke to the Gentiles, and thus preached the larger salvation, as if the blessing were being taken away from them, they forbade them in such manner as they could, by contradiction, calumnies, lying snares for their life. If this was their fall, let us beware lest it should be ours. The first saved (for as Christians we stand where the Jews stood) must understand it to be their duty, not to draw the line at themselves,

but to reach forth in blessing to all the unsaved. 3. *Final result of their conduct.* (1) *In guilt.* "To fill up their sins *always*." There is here a reflection of our Lord's words, "Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers." The Jews were on their trial as a nation. In this trial they should have filled up the measure of their good actions, of service to the world. That would have been their vindication before God. Instead of that, they filled up the measure of their sins. There is significant language used in Gen. xv. 16, "But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again; for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." It is a sad thing that it could be said of the Jews with Divine helps, as of the Amorites without Divine helps, that they were filling up their sins. They were filling up their sins *always*. It was a course which they did not alter by a genuine deep conformed repentance as a nation. The general tendency of their conduct, both before Christ, at the time of Christ, and after Christ, was to fill up their sins. They obstinately put away God from them, disregarded the Divine calls and warnings. And the ultimate result of such conduct, in the working out of the eternal purpose, could only be as here set down, the bringing of the measure of their sins up to the full. (2) *In punishment.* "But the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost." This is in contrast with the filling up of their sins, in their opposition to God and man. The wrath of God, which is here mentioned for the second time in the Epistle, is to be thought of as the predestined or the merited wrath. It is a wrath which descends upon nations as well as upon individuals. As the measure of their sins is thought of as being brought up to the full, so the wrath is thought of as reaching its utmost limit, when it must discharge itself—when, instead of probationary dealing, there must be inflictive judgment. The inspired writers here had words of our Lord on which to proceed. "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of Abel the righteous unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachiah, whom ye slew between the sanctuary and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation." The apostolic words were written within fifteen years of the destruction of Jerusalem, when the Jews were finally rejected as a nation. There is hope of their conversion at some future period; but it cannot be said that to this day the wrath of God, for their long course of disobedience, has been removed.—R. F.

Vers. 17-20.—*Great desire to see the Thessalonians.* With this another chapter might fitly have commenced.

I. THEIR DESIRE WAS ALL THE GREATER THAT THEY WERE ORPHANED OF THE THESSALONIANS. "But we, brethren, being bereaved of you for a short season, in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more exceedingly to see your face with great desire." Very different were Paul and his associates from the Jewish persecutors. They had the most tender feelings toward the Thessalonians, whom they acknowledge as brethren. The principal statement is that they were *orphaned*. It is a word which is usually applied to children who are bereaved of their parents. It is here adopted as a strong word to express the great pain which those apostolic men felt in being separated from their loved converts. They have already called themselves father and mother to the Thessalonians. Now it is rather the Thessalonians who are father and mother to them, of whom they have been bereaved, by whom they have been left desolate. Two mitigating circumstances are added. It was separation for a short season, literally, "the season of an hour." It is the language of *emotion*. It was but the season of an hour, compared with the time they would be together in the better world. Then it was separation in presence, not in heart. Still, with these mitigating circumstances, they were in an orphaned state. All the more exceedingly, then, were they zealous to see their face with great desire. This reference to the effect of absence is a touch of nature which the Thessalonians could well appreciate.

II. PAUL WAS HINDERED IN HAVING HIS DESIRE TO SEE THEM GRATIFIED. "Because we would fain have come unto you, I Paul once and again; and Satan hindered us." They would fain have come unto them. Having said this, Paul (correctively so far) refers to two definite occasions on which his plans were to proceed to Thessalonica. The statement did not pertain to Silas and Timothy, as they were probably not with him. By necessity of fact he therefore detaches himself from the others: "I Paul once and again." And once and twice Satan hindered him. There is distinct testi-

mony here to Paul's belief in a personal tempter. Satan appears here in his real character as adversary of God's people. Repeatedly he actually succeeded in hindering Paul in his good intentions. Though only a secondary agent, he has a wide range in the use of means. We are to think of the means here not as sickness (which was allowed in the case of Job), nor as other work needing to be done elsewhere, but as difficulties caused by the working of evil in the minds of persecuting enemies or unfaithful friends. The language is, "Satan hindered us;" for there was not only a hindering of Paul, but of Silas and Timothy as well, who were interested in the advancement of the cause in Thessalonica.

III. ESTEEM WAS THE REASON FOR DESIRING TO SEE THE THESSALONIANS. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of glorying? Are not even ye, before our Lord Jesus at his coming? For ye are our glory and our joy." The use of the plural, which begins with the preceding word, illustrates the humility and generosity of the apostle. As in the next statement of fact he has to slide again into the singular, he might naturally have preserved the singular in this intermediate burst of feeling. But he will not exclude Silas and Timothy when it is possible to include them. These apostolic men had their hope. Without hope it is not possible to endure existence. And if the future is not really bright, it is made to appear bright with false colours. They had not only their hope, but their joy; *i.e.* they were joyful in view of what they hoped for, which again was a crown of glorying. As Christian athletes they looked forward to their wreath of victory. This is thought of as the Thessalonian converts, they among others. These conquerors were not to appear alone before our Lord Jesus at his coming. But their converts in the various places were to be as a wreath of victory around their heads. It is faith that brings us into a fundamentally right relation to Christ; but within that relation there is room for greater or less activity. The teaching here is that we are to aim at not appearing before Christ alone at his coming. Christian parents and Christian ministers ought to be in a position to say then, "Behold I, and the children whom the Lord hath given me." There is incidentally a comforting thought in the language used. It is implied that Paul would know his converts at Christ's coming. We may, therefore, feel certain that Christian friends will know each other in the future state. And what a stimulus is this to be unremitting in our prayers and labours, so that all who are dear to us shall appear in that happy company at last, not one wanting! It is added, "For ye are our glory and our joy." As woman is said to be the glory of the man, so converts are here said to be the glory of ministers. The Thessalonian converts were a halo around the heads of their teachers. They were also their joy, a source of deep satisfaction, as their wreath of victory at the looked-for coming.—R. F.

Ver. 2.—*Boldness in declaring the gospel.* I. THERE ARE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT MAKE THE DECLARATION OF THE GOSPEL AN ACT OF BOLDNESS. St. Paul had been "shamefully entreated" at Philippi. Danger threatened also at Thessalonica. But the apostle was nothing daunted, not even holding his life dear in the prosecution of his great mission. Similar dangers beset the missionary now, and no one has a right to undertake mission work who is not prepared to endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Moral courage is not less requisite in outwardly peaceful circumstances. The discouragement of indifference, the chilling influence of ridicule, and even the hindrance of direct opposition, will meet us if we are faithful to our duty of declaring the gospel where it is most needed.

II. IT IS THE DUTY OF THOSE WHO ARE ENTRUSTED WITH THE GOSPEL NOT TO SHRINK FROM DECLARING IT IN SPIKE OF ADVERSE CIRCUMSTANCES. It is a trust, and the trust must be discharged even if the steward die at his post. The world needs the gospel most when it is most opposed to it. For the sake of the very men who mock or resist us we must faithfully discharge our message. Others also need it who must not be kept out of their lawful privileges by our weak fears. Moreover, the glory of God must be sought above all considerations of personal safety. How strangely that passion of devotion to Christ which inspired the apostles to place him at the peril of their lives contrasts with the selfish, comfort-loving habits of many who have undertaken to discharge the duties of the same stewardship in our own day!

III. A BOLD, DECIDED DECLARATION OF THE GOSPEL IS ALWAYS NECESSARY. Chris

tianity is no religion for cowards. It is a gross error to suppose that it unmans its followers. The greatest heroes of the first century were the Christians. A manly courage is much needed in the present day. The gospel should always be declared clearly, positively, and confidently by those who have a sure faith in it themselves. It is a great mistake to think that a timid, apologetic tone will be more conciliatory. We have no need to be thus timidly apologetic for the gospel, if it is true; but if it is not true, we have no right to defend it at all. In either case a weak, half-hearted advocacy is culpable. Enmity is best overcome and ridicule shamed by courage. It is most foolish for the Christian advocate to be afraid of boldly stating his beliefs before his sceptical opponent. Let us, however, distinguish true boldness from heedless provocativeness on the one hand, and from mere insolence on the other. Christians are to be wise as serpents, to be courteous, and as far as in them lies to live peaceably with all men.

IV. THE SOURCE OF CHRISTIAN BOLDNESS IS IN GOD. This boldness is a very different thing from mere brute daring. It is spiritual, sober, thoughtful. It has to face spiritual as well as carnal foes. It comes, like other Christian graces, as an inspiration from the Spirit of God. They who are most deeply in communion with God when by themselves will be most thoroughly brave when in the world. Thus Joshua was made courageous by his vision of the "captain of the host of the Lord" (Josh. v. 14). —W. F. A.

Ver. 4.—*Entrusted with the gospel.* I. THE GOSPEL IS A TRUST. 1. The gospel is of great value. If property is put in trust it is presumably valuable. We carefully guard what we prize highly. God's message of reconciliation is a charter of liberty, a covenant of grace, a promissory note of future blessings. 2. The gospel needs to be guarded and administered. It is in danger of being lost, forgotten, perverted, and corrupted. Trustees are required in order to preserve it in its integrity and to give it forth to those who need it. 3. The gospel is entrusted to men. There are those who are put in trust with the gospel. Men are to trust God; God also trusts men. He confides in the honour and devotion of his people. As the steward is entrusted with his master's estate, the servant of God receives a trust of the rich treasures of the gospel. The treasure is committed to earthen vessels. Thus does God honour his children and use them for his good purposes.

II. THE TRUSTEES OF THE GOSPEL ARE CHOSEN AND APPROVED OF GOD. God called the prophets, and Christ called the apostles. Every true Christian minister is called of God. The Church is God's chosen company of trustees of the gospel. Christian nations are providentially appointed for its custodianship. Certain qualifications are required in the trustees, in order that they may be approved of God. 1. They must hold the truth themselves. "Not of error" (ver. 3). The first requisites are an understanding of and a belief in the gospel. 2. They must live in accordance with the truth. "Nor of uncleanness." The trustee of the holy gospel must be a regenerate man. Otherwise his conduct will damage the gospel which he holds. 3. They must be honest in the discharge of the trust. "Nor in guile." No self-seeking, double-dealing, or men-pleasing can be permitted in the trustees of the gospel. They must be sincerely devoted to the truth that is entrusted to them.

III. THE TRUSTEESHIP OF THE GOSPEL IMPOSES IMPORTANT DUTIES. 1. The gospel must be preserved in its integrity. The trustees are not permitted to tamper with the trust. We have no right to add to or to detract from the gospel as it is given to us in the New Testament. It is a matter of honour that one who holds office in a Christian Church should not avail himself of the advantages of his position to advance private views which in any way militate against what is contained in the gospel charter on which the Church is founded. The New Testament is a trust-deed, and its provisions must be studiously observed, or the trusteeship implied by any active work in the Church must be resigned. Any other course is dishonest. 2. The trust of the gospel must be discharged for the benefit of those for whom it is designed. The trustees must study the interests of the beneficiaries. Trustees of the gospel are teachers of the gospel. This truth of God is not to be wrapped up in a napkin, but made use of for the good of mankind. The Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God that ultimately the Gentiles might receive those oracles from their hands. The Church is intrusted with the gospel that she may convey it to the world. The trust of the gospel carries

with it the obligation of undertaking missionary enterprises. 3. The trust of the gospel must be *discharged to the approval of God*. It is his trust. He will call the stewards to account. Their aim, therefore, must be, not to please men, but "God which proveth our hearts."—W. F. A.

Vers. 7, 8.—*The use of affectionateness in commending the gospel.* It is very interesting to observe what a wealth of affection St. Paul poured out upon the Churches which came under his care. He was not satisfied with declaring the facts of the gospel and demonstrating the truth of them to the conviction of his hearers. He was very different from a cold philosopher who simply aims at establishing a certain thesis. Deep feeling entered into his work. A touching gentleness and affectionateness may be felt as the pervading tone of his treatment of his converts. He does not behave as a master who is ambitious to lord it over the heritage of Christ. He is like a nurse with her children. The example of the great apostle is worthy of the study of all Christian teachers.

I. THE GOSPEL IS BEST COMMENDED BY AFFECTIONATENESS IN THE CHRISTIAN PREACHER. The gospel bases its first claims on its own truth and reasonableness, and it is necessary that men should be convinced on these points if due respect for the rights of the human intellect is to be observed. Nevertheless the most persuasive power is not to be found in hard reason; nor does it reside in the splendours of eloquence. It is much more effective when it comes from simple, natural affectionateness. Men are more vulnerable in the heart than in the head. The Christian teacher must attack both strongholds; he will be foolish indeed if he neglect the more accessible one. It is often seen in experience that affectionateness conquers where convincing logic falls dead, and where glowing rhetoric only dazzles the hearers. 1. *The influence of the preacher depends chiefly on his affectionateness.* His relations with his hearers are personal. He is more than the herald. He is the shepherd of the flock, the father or brother of the family, the nurse of the babes in Christ. Thus ties of love between pastor and people not only make the association in Church life happy; they also afford the greatest aids to the work of the ministry. 2. *The truth of the gospel is best revealed through affectionateness.* The gospel is no dreamy dogma, no hard law, no pompous manifesto. It is a message from a father to his children, and a story of love in death. The Bible is a most human book, homely, brotherly, pathetic in its affectionate character. But this character of the Bible and of the gospel is marred and almost lost to view when harsh language and cold feelings accompany the preaching of it. The gospel of love should be offered in a kindred spirit of love.

II. A RIGHT FEELING OF THE SPIRIT OF THE GOSPEL WILL LEAD TO AFFECTIONATENESS IN THE CHRISTIAN PREACHER. It is most important that the desired affectionateness should be genuine. The pretence of it is mere hypocrisy. Affectionate language which does not spring from a heart of love is a mockery. It is better to have an honest hardness than this assumed unctuousness. It is important, also, that the affectionateness should be healthy and manly, and should not degenerate into effeminate sentimentality. The gospel itself should inspire the right affectionateness. 1. *The spirit of the gospel being love, if we truly receive the gospel it will inspire love.* The greatest change which it produces in men is to cast out selfishness, and to give a heart of love to God and man. 2. *We best show our love to Christ by loving our brethren.* We love Christ in them. He who loves Christ warmly will have the spirit which St. Paul manifested to the Churches under his care.—W. F. A.

Ver. 12.—*Worthy of God.* I. TO BE WORTHY OF GOD IS THE HIGHEST AIM OF SPIRITUAL ASPIRATION. It is so high an aim that it seems to be hopelessly out of our reach. Are we not in everything unworthy of God? Our sinfulness is direct ill-desert, our unbelief, weakness, and imperfection dishonouring to Divine grace, our very virtues and good deeds of no absolute worth, because at best we are unprofitable servants, who have but done that which it was our duty to do. Nevertheless: 1. We should *aim at* the highest attainment, though as yet we may be far from reaching it. 2. We may become *increasingly less unworthy* of God. 3. We may *truly honour God* by our character and deeds. 4. We may hope *at last* to be worthy of God in the sense that we shall be fit to dwell with him; no disgrace to his Name when we bear it, and able to take our position as members of his family.

II. TO BE WORTHY OF GOD IS TO BE LIVING IN A RIGHT COURSE OF DAILY LIFE. This is expressed by the word "walk." 1. *It must be a continuous course.* To have passing phases of very pure spiritual thought is not to be so worthy of God as to walk continuously in obedience to his will though on a much lower plain. 2. *It is to be striven after in daily life.* We do not want angels' wings wherewith to soar into unearthly altitudes. We can walk on the lowly earth and yet be worthy of God. The worthiness depends on the spirit of our conduct, not on the sphere in which we live. With coarse surroundings, in toilsome drudgery, by humble tasks, the soul can so live as to be worthy of God.

III. IT IS THE DUTY OF ALL CHRISTIANS TO BE WORTHY OF GOD. The requirement does not belong to a counsel of perfection which a few rare souls may adopt at their will. It is laid upon all Christians as a duty. The special ground of the obligation is in what God has done for his people. He has called them "into his own kingdom and glory." 1. *Gratitude* requires us to walk worthy of God. His gifts and his promises reveal love and sacrifice on his part which naturally call for love and devotion on ours. 2. *The future destiny of Christians* also demands this conduct. The heir should behave as befits his future position. "Prince Hal" was an unworthy prince in his youth, especially because he disgraced himself in view of an exalted future. Christians are heirs of God's kingdom. Therefore they should walk worthily of him who has called them into it.

IV. IT IS THE OBJECT OF CHRISTIAN PREACHING TO LEAD MEN TO BE THUS WORTHY OF GOD. If the aim of the spiritual life must be high, so also must be that of its guide and teacher. The preacher's work is not done when a soul is first turned from the slavery of sin to the service of Christ. Then follows all the education and training of the new life up to the perfect worthiness. Hence the need of affectionate influence and all graces of persuasion.—W. F. A.

Ver. 13.—*The Word of God.* I. ST. PAUL CLAIMED TO BE A TEACHER OF THE WORD OF GOD. 1. *He did not admit that his teachings were merely human speculations on religious subjects.* His position was entirely different from that of the most gifted philosopher, more exalted since he stood forth as the apostle of superhuman truth, and also more humble since he subordinated his own private ideas to the message of which he was but the bearer. 2. *St. Paul did not profess to be simply a witness of the facts of the gospel.* That was the position of the first Christian teachers. St. Peter and his companions of the day of Pentecost presented themselves as witnesses of the great transactions of the life of Christ, and chiefly of his resurrection. They narrated what they had seen and heard (Acts ii. 32; 1 John i. 1). St. Paul had not been a companion of our Lord. But he had something higher than the knowledge of experience and observation. He did not learn his gospel of men; it was revealed to him in the solitudes of Arabia. 3. *St. Paul claimed to be inspired with a Divine revelation.* It was not his thought, nor even his testimony of Divine facts, but the Word of God that he proclaimed. It is plain that the apostle used his own language, and spoke in a characteristic and individual style. He also reasoned with his own intellect; for inspiration does not simply breathe through a man as through a mechanical instrument. But his language and thought and whole being were illumined and elevated by the Spirit of God, so that he saw the truth of God and was able to speak the Word of God.

II. THE THESSALONIANS ACCEPTED ST. PAUL'S MESSAGE AS THE WORD OF GOD. 1. *They admitted the fact.* They did so, no doubt, first because the power and personal influence of the apostle impressed them; then because they were convinced by his arguments; then because they must have felt the inherent beauty and greatness of what he taught; and lastly because they saw the good effects of his gospel. By these four gradations we are led on to a more and more consistent belief in the Divine authority of the gospel; viz. by authority, by argument, by the excellency of the gospel itself, and by its fruits. 2. *The Thessalonians received the message as befitting its Divine origin.* (1) They believed in its truth. God only speaks what is true. To establish a message as the Word of God is to prove its truth. (2) They submitted to its authority. There may be many things in the gospel which we cannot account for. Our faith in God should be implicit. (3) They yielded to its influence. Thus they let it work in them. The Word of God is a word of grace and a word of command. To accept it aright we must avail ourselves of the grace and obey the command. To

receive a word of pardon as from a king is to leave the prison when the door is open. To receive a message as from a master is to carry out the order.

III. ST. PAUL'S TEACHING PROVED ITSELF TO BE THE WORD OF GOD BY ITS EFFECTS. It was found to be working in the Church at Thessalonica. The Word of God is powerful (Heb. iv. 12). Christ's words were spirit and life (John vi. 63). This Divine Word is no barren revelation of far-off celestial curiosities. It is a message concerning human and earthly as well as heavenly affairs. Like the first creative word, when God spake and it was done, the message of the new creation is a word that effects. God's words are deeds. But that they may be deeds in us it is necessary for us to receive them in faith. And in proportion to our faith will the energy of God's Word work in us.—W. F. A.

Ver. 16.—*Fulness of sins.* "To fill up their sins *always*." This is a terrible and mysterious expression. Some light may be gained by considering it in relation to the history of the Jews, as it is of these people that it is here written. They had accumulated sin upon sin in slaying Christ and the prophets, in expelling the apostles from their communion, and finally in hindering the Gentiles from receiving that gospel which they had rejected for themselves. But there was to come an end to this tale of wickedness. The time was drawing near when the Jews would no longer have power to hurt the cause of Christianity, and when swift punishment for their accumulated iniquities would descend in the destruction of their city and nation. They were hastening to fill up the sins which must issue in this fearful doom.

I. THE GREATEST SIN IS THAT OF SINNING WITHOUT RESTRAINT. It is a mistake to speak of every sin as of infinite guilt, or of all sins as equally guilty. Such an assertion is not only false, it tends either to despair or to reckless excess in sinning. However far one has gone in sin, it is better to stop than to go on to greater enormities. To be adding sin to sin, and to be sinning "*always*," are signs of reckless, abandoned depravity.

II. THERE IS A FULNESS OF SINS WHICH BRINGS ITS OWN PENALTY. When sin reaches this point the penalty can no longer be stayed. The cup once full flows over in wrath and ruin. It is as though forbearance and guilt were in the scales. When guilt is full the balance dips. There is an end to all possible long-suffering. The more men go on in excesses of sin, the faster do they approach the inevitable day of reckoning. The sooner the sin is filled up to the measure which passes endurance, the sooner must the stroke of doom fall.

III. FULNESS OF SINS MUST LEAD TO FULNESS OF PUNISHMENT. They who fill up their sins *always* will have the wrath "come upon them to the uttermost." The worst debtor must be made to pay the last farthing. The swifter the rush downhill, the greater the crash at the bottom. The more tares that are sown in spring, the more bundles to burn in harvest. He who fills the present life with sins will have the next life filled with wrath.

IV. THERE SEEMS TO BE A LIMIT TO SINS. There is a fulness of sins. There is no fulness of virtues; these can be developed indefinitely. The good man is growing up to a perfection. The bad man is being corrupted, not to a perfection, but to a fulness. Evil has limits; goodness has none. Satan is let loose for a time. God restrains the wrath of the wicked. Sin, through rebellion against God, cannot break away from all Divine control. Sins are limited by several means: 1. *Capacity.* We have a limited power of sinning. 2. *Time.* God sometimes cuts the sinner off in the midst of his days, and brings the guilty nation to destruction. 3. *Providential control.* The fulness of sins is not the amount which God predestines to be committed, for God is not the author of sin, nor does he will or permit it. This fulness is the measure beyond which God stays the evil from proceeding. When the tide of iniquity, driven onwards by rebellious powers, reaches this fulness, God says, "Here shall thy proud waves be stayed," and the storm beats itself out in impotent fury.—W. F. A.

Ver. 18.—*Hindered by Satan.* St. Paul tells his friends at Thessalonica that he was anxious to revisit them, and that he made the attempt to do so more than once, but that he was hindered by Satan. The direct impediment may have been the opposition of his enemies (Acts xvii. 13, 14); or it may have been bodily sickness—"a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan." Whatever this immediate and visible hin-

drance was, the point of interest to us is that St. Paul attributed it to Satan. Let us consider the hindrance thrown in the way of good work by Satan.

I. SATAN HINDERS THE WORK OF THE GOSPEL. 1. *The hindrance is to be seen in all times.* Doors are shut; enemies are raised up; misunderstandings throw mission work into confusion. 2. *The source of the hindrance may be discovered by its character.* "By their fruits they shall know them." The excuse may be the preservation of order, the restraint of excesses, or conservative respect for old ways. That the real source of opposition is Satanic may be known when (1) bad men are the agents, (2) a good moral reformation is frustrated. 3. *This hindrance converts mission work into a warfare.* The Church becomes an army. The forces of light and darkness are drawn up in battle array. New territory cannot simply be claimed by planting the standard of the cross upon it. It must be fought for and won in conquest.

II. SATAN'S HINDRANCE IS INDEPENDENT OF THE CHARACTER OF THE CHRISTIAN LABOURERS. Of course, if these men receive Satan into their hearts, so much the more effectually will their mission be frustrated. They become traitors who destroy their own cause by opening the gates of the citadel to the foe. Sin indulged by the servant of Christ is treason. This is a certain and fearful hindrance to success. But the Christian labourer may be faithful and may still be hindered by Satan. In the old tradition Satan dared to oppose the archangel Michael. Shall we be surprised that he opposes a man? Satan resisted and tempted Christ. He hindered St. Paul. Therefore do not let us think that all difficulties will vanish if only we are true and faithful. Satan may hinder us, though we are innocent, through the wickedness of other men.

III. SATAN'S HINDRANCE IS OVERRULED BY GOD'S PROVIDENCE. Here St. Paul writes of Satan hindering him. In the Acts St. Luke tells us how, when the apostle and his friends "assayed to go into Bithynia, . . . the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not" (Acts xvi. 7). Is it not possible that sometimes the two influences may have concurred in effecting the same results though originating in the very opposite sources and prompted by contradictory motives? Thus the messenger of Satan that was sent to buffet St. Paul was the means of applying a wholesome discipline and of saving him from undue self-exaltation. Thus, too, though Satan troubled Job, with the object of showing him to be a hypocrite; the great trial proved to be for the glory of God as well as for the honour of his servant. Satan tempted Christ, and so made him the better High Priest for us. Satan compassed the death of Christ, and thereby led to the redemption of the world. Satan's hindrance to our work may be overruled for its more full accomplishment in the end, just as the east winds of early spring help to secure a good fruit harvest by checking the too-early development of bud and blossom. Moreover, all this hindrance is but temporary. Satan's reign is for a season only. And when the hindrance is removed the final result will not have suffered for the delay. Perhaps it will even come the quicker for the temporary hindrance, as, when once it bursts its bounds, the stream rushes out with the more vehemence for having been dammed up. Let us not be impatient. Remember that God has all eternity to work with.—W. F. A.

EXPOSITION.

CHAPTER III.

CONTENTS.—The apostle, no longer able to repress his longing and anxiety for the Thessalonians, resolved to be left alone at Athens, and sent Timothy for the purpose of exhorting them to endurance amid their persecutions, and to bring him information concerning their condition. Timothy had just rejoined him at Coriuth, and the apostle expresses the extreme satisfaction which he felt at the welcome tidings which his messenger had brought of their faith

and love; it put new life into him, and comforted him in all his affliction and distress. He prays God that he may be permitted to revisit the Thessalonians, and to supply what was still defective in their faith; and he makes it the object of his earnest supplication that the Lord Jesus would make them so to increase in love and establish them in holiness that they may be blameless at his appearance with all his holy ones.

Ver. 1.—This verse is closely connected with the concluding verses of the last

chapter, from which it should not be separated. Wherefore; on account of my affection toward you and my repeated vain attempts to see you. When we. Some refer the plural to Paul, Silas, and Timothy (ch. i. 1); others to Paul and Silas, as Timothy had been sent to Thessalonica; but it is to be restricted to Paul, as is evident from ch. ii. 38 and iii. 5, and inasmuch as Paul was left alone at Athens; the plural being here used for the singular. Could no longer forbear; could no longer restrain our longing and anxiety to know your condition. We thought it good; a happy translation of the original, expressing both "we were pleased and resolved." To be left at Athens alone; an expression of solitude. Alone in Athens, in the very metropolis of idolatry. Compare with this the common saying, "Alone in London." In the Acts of the Apostles we are informed that Paul came to Athens alone, and that there he waited for Silas and Timothy (Acts xvii. 14, 15), and that these fellow-workers rejoined him at Corinth (Acts xviii. 5). Many expositors, however, from this and the next verse, infer that Timothy at least joined Paul at Athens, but was sent back by him to Thessalonica, to inquire into the condition of his converts in that city. Such is the opinion of Olshausen, Neander, De Wette, Lünemann, Hofmann, Koch, and Schott; and, among English expositors, of Macknight, Paley, Eadie, Jowett, Ellieott, and Wordsworth. There is no contradiction between this view and the narrative of the Acts. Luke merely omits to mention Timothy's short visit to Athens and departure from it, and relates only the final reunion of these three fellow-workers at Corinth. Indeed, Paley gives this coming of Timothy to Athens as one of the undesigned coincidences between this Epistle and the Acts of the Apostles.¹ Still, however, we are not necessitated to suppose that Timothy joined the apostle at Athens. The words admit of the opinion that he was sent by Paul direct from Beroea, and not from Athens; and that he and Silas did not join Paul until they came from Macedonia to Corinth. Such is the opinion of Hug, Wieseler, Koppe, Alford, and Vaughan.

Ver. 2.—*And sent Timotheus.* This was a great act of self-sacrifice on the part of Paul; because to be without an assistant and fellow-labourer in the gospel in such a city as Athens, the very centre and strong hold of heathenism, full of temples and idols, must necessarily have brought upon him many discomforts; and yet his anxiety for the Thessalonians overcame all motives

of personal convenience. Our brother, and minister of God, and our fellow-labourer. The reading of manuscripts here varies. Some important manuscripts read, "our brother and fellow-worker with God"—a phrase which is elsewhere employed by the apostle: "for we are labourers together with God" (1 Cor. iii. 9). Retaining, however, the reading of the text, Paul here calls Timothy his brother, expressing his esteem and fraternal affection for him; "a minister of God," expressing Timothy's official position and the honour conferred on him by Christ; and his "fellow-labourer," expressing his laborious work in preaching the gospel, and reminding the Thessalonians of his labours among them. Different reasons have been assigned for this eulogy pronounced by Paul on Timothy. Some suppose that it was to show how eagerly he consulted the welfare of the Thessalonians, by sending to them a person of such importance and of such use to himself as Timothy (Calvin); others think that it was to recommend Timothy to the favourable regard of the Thessalonians in the absence of himself (Chrysostom); but it appears to be the natural outburst of affection for his favourite disciple. In the gospel of Christ. Timothy had laboured with Paul and Silas in the publication of the gospel at Thessalonica, and was consequently well known to the Thessalonians, and favourably regarded by them. To establish you, and to comfort you; or rather, to exhort you, as the matter of exhortation follows. Concerning your faith; in order to the continuance and furtherance of your faith. The purpose of the mission of Timothy; namely, to confirm the Thessalonians in the faith, to exhort them to perseverance in Christianity, notwithstanding the persecutions to which they were exposed.

Ver. 3.—This verse contains the object of the exhortation; the clause is an accusative to the verb. That no man should be moved (or, shaken) by; or rather, in; expressing the position in which they were placed. These afflictions. The same word as "tribulation" in the next verse. For yourselves know. How they knew is explained, partly from the forewarnings of the apostle, and partly from their own experience. That we; not to be referred to Paul only, nor to Paul and his companions, Silas and Timothy, nor to Paul and the Thessalonians, but to all Christians in general; that we Christians. Are appointed thereunto; namely, by God. Our afflictions do not result from chance, but are the necessary consequence of our Christianity; they arise from the appointment and ordinance of God. Tribulation is the Christian's portion. Whatever truth there may be in the saying that prosperity

¹ Paley's 'Hæc Paulinæ,' 1 Thessalonians, No. iii.

is the promise of the Old Testament, affliction is certainly the promise of the New. We must be conformed to Christ in his sufferings. "In the world," says our Lord, "ye shall have tribulation" (John xvi. 33). When our Lord called Paul to his apostleship, he showed him how great things he must suffer for his Name's sake (Acts ix. 16). All the apostles suffered from persecution, and concerning Christians in general Paul asserts that it is only through tribulation that they can enter into the kingdom of God (Acts xiv. 22; see Rev. vii. 14).

Ver. 4.—**For**; assigning the reason why they should not be moved by these afflictions. Verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we; here also Christians in general. Should suffer. Not a simple future, but denoting that it was thus appointed in the counsels of God—that their tribulation was the result of the Divine purpose. **Tribulation** (*affliction*); even as it came to pass, and ye know; that is, from your own experience. The affliction, then, was not some strange thing which had befallen them.

Ver. 5.—**For this cause**, when I could no longer forbear; no longer repress my anxiety, and endure my want of information concerning you. I sent to know your faith; to receive information concerning your spiritual condition. Lest by some means the tempter; a designation of Satan, used also by Matthew (iv. 3). Have tempted you, and our labour be in vain; that is, useless, without result (see on ch. ii. 1; comp. also Gal. iv. 11, "I am afraid, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain"). The temptation to which the Thessalonians were exposed was that of apostasy from Christianity, through the fear or endurance of persecution. That the tempter had tempted them is probable—it was almost unavoidable; that he had succeeded in his temptation, and had thus rendered the apostle's labours among them useless, was uncertain—a contingency which might possibly have taken place.

Ver. 6.—**But now** when Timotheus came from you unto us. Timothy, as we learn from the Acts, in company with Silas, joined Paul at Corinth (Acts xviii. 15), and brought him information concerning the state of the Thessalonian Church. **And brought us good tidings**; the same word which is elsewhere employed for preaching the gospel. The information which Timothy brought to the apostle was as it were a gospel to him (comp. Luke ii. 10, "Behold I bring you good tidings"). **Of your faith and charity**. The good tidings which Timothy brought referred to the spiritual condition of the Thessalonians—their faith had not been shaken and their love had not

waxed cold under the persecutions to which they were exposed; and along with their faith and love was the affection which they bore to the apostle, and their earnest desire to see him. **And that ye have constant remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you**. The affection between the Thessalonians and the apostle was mutual.

Ver. 7.—**Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you**—with reference to you—in all our affliction and distress. Some refer "affliction" to outward troubles, and "distress" to internal evils—referring the one to the persecutions arising from his Corinthian opponents, and the other to his bodily infirmity (Koch). Such a distinction is, however, precarious. The words do not refer to the apostle's anxiety on account of the Thessalonians, for that was removed by the coming of Timothy. Clearly some external trouble is denoted. Paul, when he preached the gospel at Corinth, and before he obtained the protection of Gallio, was exposed to much persecution and danger. The Jews had expelled him from their synagogue (Acts xviii. 6), and attempts had been made against him which at length broke out into an insurrection against him, when he was dragged before the Roman tribunal (Acts xviii. 12). His condition at Corinth when he wrote this Epistle was dark and gloomy. **By your faith**; by the steadfastness of your faith. The good news which Timothy brought of the faith and love of the Thessalonians comforted the apostle amid all the trials and difficulties and disappointments of his ministry (comp. with this passage 2 Cor. vii. 4-7).

Ver. 8.—**For now we live**. Not to be referred to the eternal and future life (Chrysostom); or to be weakened as if it merely signified, "We relish and enjoy life notwithstanding our affliction and distress" (Pelt); but the meaning is the good tidings which Timothy has brought have imparted new life unto us; "we are in the full strength and freshness of life, we do not feel the sorrows and tribulations which the outer world prepares for us" (Lüdemann). The apostle considers his condition of affliction and distress as a kind of death: so, elsewhere he says, "I die daily" (1 Cor. xv. 31); and from which death he was now again raised to life. If; provided—a hypothetical assumption. **Ye stand fast**; continue firm in the faith of the gospel. **In the Lord**; the element of true life.

Ver. 9.—**For**; assigning the reason of the declaration, "now we live." What thanks can we render to God again for you. As their steadfastness in the faith was owing to God's grace, thanks was to be rendered to God on their behalf. **For all the joy**; joy

in all its fulness (comp. Jas. i. 2, "Count it all joy"). **Wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God.** Giving prominence to the purity of their joy.

Ver. 10.—Night and day (comp. ch. ii. 9) **praying exceedingly.** Denoting the intense earnestness and anxiety of the apostle for the spiritual welfare of the Thessalonians, that found vent to itself in incessant prayer for them. Now follows the subject-matter of his prayer: **That we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith.** The faith of the Thessalonians was not perfect; it was "lacking" in several respects. It was defective in extent; they were ignorant of many of the doctrines of the gospel, and had formed erroneous views of other doctrines, such as the second advent. It was defective in application; they had not yet renounced all the corrupt practices of their former heathen life, nor had they embodied all the precepts of the gospel into their actual life. The Thessalonians were as yet but novices. So also the reason which impelled Paul to wish to come to Rome was to supply that which was lacking in the faith of the Roman converts (Rom. i. 11). Confirmation was a work in which the apostle delighted, being both important and desirable. In general, faith at first is weak and defective; it is only developed by degrees. Especially is it increased by every increase of spiritual knowledge. "Add to your faith knowledge" (2 Pet. i. 5, 6). The remark of Calvin is worthy of attention: "Paul is desirous of having the opportunity given him of supplying what is wanting in the faith of the Thessalonians, or, which is the same thing, completing in all its parts their faith which was as yet imperfect. Yet this is the faith which he had previously extolled marvellously. From this we infer that those who far surpass others are still far distant from the goal. Hence, whatever progress we may have made, let us keep in view our deficiencies, that we may not be reluctant to aim at something further."

Ver. 11.—Now God himself and our Father; or, as we would express it according to the English idiom, *God himself, our Father,* omitting the conjunction. **And our Lord Jesus**

Christ. Some suppose that the three Divine Persons of the sacred Trinity are here expressly named: God the Holy Ghost, and the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ; but the words in the original will not bear this sense: "God himself and our Father" is the same Divine Person. **Direct.** It is to be observed that the verb "direct" is in the Greek in the singular, thus denoting a unity between God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. At all events, we have an express prayer directed to Christ, thus necessarily implying his Divine nature. **Our way unto you.**

Ver. 12.—And the Lord. By some referred to the First Person of the blessed Trinity, God our Father (Alford); by others to the Holy Ghost, as the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ are afterwards both mentioned in the prayer; but it is to be referred, according to the prevailing usage in Paul's Epistle, to the Lord Jesus Christ. **Make you;** literally, *you may the Lord make,* putting the emphasis on "you." **To increase and abound in love one toward another;** toward your fellow-Christians. **And toward all men;** toward the human race in general. "This is the character of Divine love to comprehend all; whereas human love hath respect to one man and not to another" (Theophylact). **Even as we do toward you;** that is, as we abound in love toward you.

Ver. 13.—To the end (in order that) he may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God. In the sight of God, in his judgment who searcheth the hearts. The words, "before God," are to be conjoined neither with "holiness" nor with "unblamable," but with the whole phrase, "unblamable in holiness." **Even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ;** at the second advent. **With all his saints.** By "saints" or "holy ones" are by some understood the angels who shall accompany Christ to judgment; but although the term "saints" is used of the angels in the Old Testament, it is never so employed in the New. The word seems to denote those holy men who have died in the Lord and who shall be raised at the advent, and accompany Christ to the judgment.

HOMILETICS.

Vers. 3, 4.—Connection between affliction and religion. True religion, instead of delivering those who possess it from suffering, rather entails suffering upon them. Believers are appointed by God to suffer tribulation. This was peculiarly true of the early Christians, but it is true generally. We are appointed to afflictions (1) in order that by them our fitness for heaven and our relish for our everlasting rest may be increased; (2) in order that we may thus learn the blessed graces of patience and resignation—graces which we could not learn in health and prosperity, and which will be useful to us in a world of glory (1 Cor. iv. 17, 18).

Vers. 3, 8.—*Steadfastness in faith and affliction.* "That no man should be moved by these afflictions." We are certainly not now exposed to persecutions, but still there are afflictions peculiar to the Christian life. We are forewarned of them, and therefore are not to regard them as strange or unexpected calamities. 1. *This steadfastness is the work of God.* God is able to make us stand, and will cause us to be more than conquerors. He can even, while we continue in this state of warfare, establish our hearts unblamable in holiness. 2. *This steadfastness is the work of man.* We must co-operate with God. We must beware of being either terrified by threats or allured by blandishments. We must exercise prayer, watchfulness, and the active performance of Christian duties.

Vers. 6—8.—*The duties of minister and people.* In the reciprocal feelings of the apostle and his Thessalonian converts, we gain instruction regarding the mutual conduct of minister and people. 1. *Duties of the minister.* The affection and anxiety which he should have for his people; the earnestness with which he should pray for them; the gratitude with which he should thank God for their spiritual welfare; the joy which he experiences in the steadfastness of their faith and the warmth of their charity; the care and diligence with which he should supply what is lacking in their faith. 2. *Duties of the people.* The reciprocal affection which they should have for their minister; the good remembrance which they should entertain of him; the obedience which they should render unto him in spiritual matters; the constant prayers which they should offer up for him.

Ver. 9.—*Joy in the spiritual welfare of others.* We rejoice in the temporal prosperity of our friends; much more ought we to rejoice in their spiritual prosperity. "Now we live," says the apostle, "if ye stand fast in the Lord." And similarly the Apostle John says, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth." We must imitate the angels in heaven, who rejoice at the repentance of a sinner. We must imbibe the spirit of the Lord Jesus himself, who is represented as rejoicing when he had found the sheep that was lost. We should rejoice (1) because souls are rescued from hell and Satan; (2) because Christ is glorified in the salvation of men; (3) because new members are born into the family of God; (4) because boundless happiness is secured.

Ver. 10.—*Defective faith.* Our faith may be defective in various ways. 1. *In its quality.* It may be mingled with unbelief or with doubts; we may only partially believe. If so, let our prayer be, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." 2. *In its objects.* It may not embrace all the revealed truths of religion; we may be ignorant of some of them, or have adopted erroneous notions concerning others. If so, we must "add to our faith knowledge." 3. *In its efficacy.* It may be too much of a dead faith; it may not exercise itself outwardly; it may not sufficiently influence our practice. If so, we must remember that "faith, if it hath not works, is dead." 4. *In its steadfastness.* Our faith may be wavering, unstable, liable to fail; it may be variable; sometimes we may be strong in the faith, and at other times weak. If so, let our prayer be, "Lord, increase our faith."

Ver. 12.—*Prayer addressed to Christ.* We have here an instance of prayer addressed to Christ. The apostle prays that Christ may direct his way to the Thessalonians, and make them abound in love. The martyr Stephen breathed out his spirit in a prayer to Christ. And Christians in general are represented as those who in every place call on the Lord Jesus. "There is no foundation," as Bishop Alexander remarks, "for any such statement as that 'truly primitive and apostolic prayer is invariably to God through Christ.'" Christ himself is often in Scripture the direct Object of worship. Now, if Christ be not God, the apostle and early Christians were idolaters. The divinity of Christ is the only ground on which the worship of Christ can be defended.

Vers. 12, 13.—*Religious progress.* 1. *The nature of religious progress.* It is an increase in love to our fellow-Christians and to all men. 2. *The ultimate end of*

religious progress. The establishment of our hearts in holiness, and our being presented blameless before the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming.

Ver. 13.—*The ultimate end of the Christian dispensation.* The establishment of believers in holiness before God at the advent of Christ is the ultimate design of Christianity. Or, as Paul elsewhere expresses the same truth, "Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. v. 26, 27). And again, "That ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. i. 8). What a glorious consummation! What a perfection of holiness! When faith and love will both be perfect; when all that is lacking in our faith will be supplied; and all that is defective in our love will be remedied; and when the whole Church will be presented faultless and blameless before God; when sin and moral imperfection will be for ever excluded!

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Vers. 1—5.—*The design of Timothy's mission to Thessalonica.* When the apostle could no longer control his longing to see his converts, he sent them Timothy by way of relieving his solicitude in their behalf. His love for them was manifest in all the circumstances of this mission.

I. HE SACRIFICES HIS OWN IMMEDIATE COMFORT TO THEIR BENEFIT. "We thought it good to be left at Athens alone." 1. *Though Timothy was most necessary to him in the ministry, he parted with him for their good.* 2. *Athens, as a seat of boundless idolatry, exercised such a depressing influence upon him that he needed the stimulus of Timothy's society.* Yet he denied himself this comfort that he might serve them.

II. HE DESPATCHES TO THEM THE MOST HIGHLY ESTEEMED OF HIS FELLOW-LABOURERS. "Our brother, and minister of God, and fellow-labourer in the gospel of Christ." He selects one best fitted to serve them by his gifts, his experience, and his knowledge of the apostle's views and wishes. The various titles here given to Timothy help to honour him before the Churches, and to challenge the abiding confidence of the Thessalonians.

III. THE DESIGN OF TIMOTHY'S MISSION. It was twofold: "To establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith," and "to know your faith." 1. *The necessity for his mission.* The afflictions which they were enduring for the gospel. (1) These afflictions had a most disturbing tendency. "That no one be disquieted by these afflictions." The converts had newly emerged from heathenism, and therefore the apostle was more concerned on their behalf. Yet, as we know from the Second Epistle, they remained firm. "We ourselves glory in you in the Churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure" (2 Thess. i. 4). (2) These afflictions were of Divine appointment. "For yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto." They were, therefore, "no strange thing." They come by the will of God, who has determined their nature, severity, and duration. "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves." The afflictions were not accidental. (3) They were clearly foreseen by the apostle. "When we were with you we told you beforehand that we are to suffer affliction." (a) It is the duty of ministers to forewarn their converts of coming affliction, lest they should be offended thereby. (b) Converts, when forewarned, ought to be forearmed, so that they may not sink under them, much less forsake the gospel on account of them. "For the light afflictions are but for a moment, and work out an exceeding weight of glory." (4) Satan is the main source of danger in these afflictions. "Lest by any means the tempter had tempted you." The apostle was "not ignorant of his devices," and was apprehensive lest Satan should get an advantage of his converts by moving them from the hope of the gospel, and causing them to relinquish their profession of it. (5) The only security against Satan's temptations—faith; for this "is the victory that overcometh the world"—this is the shield "wherewith they could quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." 2. *The manner in which Timothy's mission was to be discharged.* "To establish you and to comfort

you concerning your faith." (1) In relation to the Thessalonians. Timothy would (a) establish them by giving them a fresh exhibition of the truth with its manifold evidences. The strongest faith needs confirmation. The apostles were in the habit of confirming the souls of the disciples (Acts xiv. 22). (b) He would comfort them concerning their faith by exhibiting the example of Christ, the glory that must accrue to God from their steadfastness, and the hope of the coming kingdom. (2) In relation to the apostle himself. "To know your faith." One object of his sending Timothy was to put an end to his own anxieties and doubts on their behalf, for he might fear that "his labour would be in vain." He might hope the best but fear the worst, for he was most deeply concerned in their welfare.—T. C.

Vers. 6—8.—*The happy issue of Timothy's visit to Thessalonica.* This Epistle was written immediately after Timothy's return as expressive of the apostle's hearty relief at his tidings.

I. THE GOOD TIDINGS. "Your faith and charity, and that ye have remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you." 1. *Their faith.* He was gratified to hear of the steadfastness and soundness of their faith. They abounded in the (1) grace of faith, which was unfeigned, growing, and lively; (2) in the doctrine of faith, which had much light in it; (3) in the profession of faith, which they held fast without wavering, out of a pure conscience. 2. *Their love.* This, which was the fruit of their faith, had not waxed cold on account of abounding iniquity. Their faith worked by love. The two graces are always found together. Christian love must be without dissimulation, in deed and in truth, fervent and constant. 3. *Their constant and kindly remembrance of the apostle.* "Ye have a good remembrance of us always." They thought much of their spiritual teachers, bore their persons in memory, thought of them with gratitude and respect, and, no doubt, remembered them in their prayers. 4. *Their desire to see the apostle.* They desired to have their memories refreshed by a personal visit from him. If they had begun to fall away, they would not have been so anxious to see him. There was a tender attachment on both sides, for there was a longing on both sides for further fellowship.

II. THE EFFECTS OF THESE GOOD TIDINGS ON THE APOSTLE. "Therefore we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith." 1. *They enabled him, if not to forget, at least to bear up, under a weighty burden of trial.* He was now at Corinth, in peril and persecution from the Jews, who "opposed themselves and blasphemed" (Acts xviii. 5—17; 1 Cor. ii. 3). He was disconsolate and dispirited, almost like a dead man, carrying about with him the dying of the Lord Jesus; but now the news of Timothy revived him, like life from the dead, infusing into him new life and vigour. It was their faith especially which comforted him. There is no comfort to a minister comparable to that which springs from the stability and perseverance of his people. 2. *The very continuance of his life seemed to be dependent upon their steadfastness.* "For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord." The language is almost painfully strong. It suggested to them: (1) The necessity of continued watchfulness and faith. (2) The true secret of steadfastness—being "in the Lord." Thus only would "they build themselves up in their most holy faith," "continuing steadfastly in the Church's prayers and instructions." (3) How much they could affect, not the comfort only, but the life of their teachers, by their vigilance and perseverance!—T. C.

Vers. 9, 10.—*The apostle's gratitude to God and his further solicitude for his converts.* I. HIS GRATITUDE FOR THE JOY IMPARTED BY TIMOTHY'S TIDINGS. "For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God?" 1. *He has no words to express his gratitude to God for their constancy.* 2. *The joy he experienced was not in the greed of any worldly advantage he had gained, but was the hearty and sincere joy of one profoundly interested in their spiritual welfare.* 3. *It was joy "before God," who sees and knows all inward thoughts and feelings, and therefore knows its reality and power.*

II. HIS PRAYERFUL ANXIETY TO SEE THE THESSALONIANS FOR THEIR FURTHER BENEFIT. "Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith." His prayers had an extraordinary fervency. Ministers ought to be much in prayer for their flocks. 1. *The deficiencies*

in their faith. They had already received the grace of faith and the doctrine of faith, and exhibited in its fulness the "work of faith." But there were deficiencies still to be supplied. (1) Their faith wanted still greater power, for they had hardly yet escaped all danger of relapse into heathen impurities. (2) It wanted to be more widely diffused through all the duties of life, for they needed to mind honest industry and forswear idleness. (3) They needed fuller light upon the second advent. 2. *The design of the ministry is to supply these deficiencies of faith.* The apostle longed to be at Thessalonica once more, not only to impart to them "some spiritual gift, to the end they might be established" (Rom. i. 10, 11), but to give them fuller teaching upon the various points where their faith needed enlargement. It is God's work to increase faith, but ministers can promote it as instruments, for they are "for the perfecting of the saints in the knowledge of the Son of God."—T. C.

Ver. 11.—*Further prayer for his personal return to Thessalonica.* The apostle had hitherto been hindered by Satan from carrying out his intention. "But may God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you."

I. THE APOSTLE RECOGNIZED A DIVINE HAND IN ALL THAT CONCERNED HIS PERSONAL LIFE. His way to Thessalonica seemed hitherto blocked up, but he felt that it depended, not upon Satan, nor upon his wicked instruments, but upon the will of God himself, whether he should ever take that way. This implies: 1. *Our journeys are not in our own power.* Man may plan his own ways, but God directs his goings; for "a good man's steps are ordered by the Lord." 2. *Our journeys are not to be undertaken without God's will.* (Jas. iv. 13, 14; Rom. i. 10.) It is for him to order us where and when to go. 3. *It is in his power only to remove the obstacles to our journeys.*

II. THE APOSTLE RECOGNIZED THIS PROVIDENTIAL GUIDANCE AS EQUALLY EXERCISED BY THE FATHER AND THE SON. 1. *He prays here to both Father and Son.* The same prayer is addressed to both without distinction, for the verb is in the singular number. Must not Jesus, therefore, be a Divine Person? 2. *Father and Son are here regarded as possessing one indivisible will,* as exercising a joint agency in the guidance of men, and as possessing an equality of power to this end. Athanasius saw this fact clearly in the grammatical peculiarity of the passage. 3. *The apostle exercises an appropriating faith in both Father and Son,* for he speaks of "our God and Father," and our Lord Jesus Christ. He was, therefore, all the more disposed to trust submissively to the directing hand of God.—T. C.

Vers. 12, 13.—*The apostle's prayer for the progressive sanctification of the Thessalonians and their final perfection at the coming of Christ.* He has just prayed for himself, but whether he is to come to them or not, he has a prayer for their spiritual benefit.

I. CONSIDER THE PERSON TO WHOM THE PRAYER IS ADDRESSED. "But you may the Lord enlarge." It is the Lord Jesus, who, "as the Purchaser of the Church with his own blood," has received the fulness of the Spirit for the benefit of his people. It was to the Lord the apostles addressed the unanimous prayer, "Increase our faith."

II. THE BLESSING PRAYED FOR. "But you may the Lord enlarge and make to abound in love toward one another, and toward all." 1. *The existence of their love is frankly admitted.* He had spoken of "their labour of love." He prays now for its increase. 2. *Their love was to be an abounding love.* (1) There were defects in their love, as there were defects in their faith, to be supplied from the inexhaustible Source of all love. (2) The objects of their love were (a) "one another," those of the household of faith, who were to have the first place in their affections; (b) but "all men" likewise, as children of a common Father, for as we have opportunity we must do good unto all men (Gal. vi. 10), the world itself being the field of our missionary labours. The Apostle Peter adds "love" to "brotherly kindness" in the chain of Christian graces, as if to imply that brotherly kindness might become a narrow, sectarian thing, and therefore the love of man as man is enjoined.

III. THE DESIGN AND TENDENCY OF THIS PROGRESSIVE INCREASE. "To the end that he may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." 1. *This implies that establishment in holiness is necessarily involved in the enlargement of both faith and love.* 2. *It implies that stability in holiness is the great end of Christian life in a world which*

shakes believers by fears and temptations and delusions. 3. *It implies that without perfect holiness we cannot appear without blame before God.* 4. *It implies that perfect holiness is reserved for the second coming.* (1) It is not attainable in this life. We are not here "without spot or wrinkle." (2) It is connected with the redemption of the body. (3) It is connected with the final glorification of the redeemed; for all the saints are to be associated with the Judge as assessors in the final judgment (Luke xxii. 30; John v. 28; 1 Cor. vi. 3). Therefore let us pray for the increase of faith and love, and live in the blessed hope of the "day of Christ."—T. C.

Vers. 1—5.—*Proof of the apostle's love for the Thessalonians.* I. THE MISSION OF TIMOTHY. 1. *He could no longer forbear.* Mark the intensity of his affection. He repeats the words twice, ver. 1 and ver. 5, first in the plural, then in the singular number, implying, perhaps, that while all the missionaries longed to know how it fared with the Thessalonians, his longing was the most overmastering. He must hear of his converts, cost him what it might. The suspense was agonizing; he could endure it no longer; so deep, so burning, was his interest in their spiritual state. What an example to Christian pastors now! 2. *He would submit to any sacrifice; he would be left alone at Athens.* "Alone in London" has almost passed into a proverb. Loneliness is nowhere felt so much as in a great city—a

"Crowded wilderness,
Where ever-moving myriads seem to say,
'Go! thou art nought to us, nor we to thee—away!'"

St. Paul felt like this at Athens. To the student of history, to the lover of classical antiquities, Athens is one of the most attractive of cities. To St. Paul it was almost a desert. He does not seem to have found delight in natural beauty or in historic associations; the one object of his life was to extend the Redeemer's kingdom, to win souls to Christ. The Athenians of his day had much curiosity, much versatility, but no depth of character, no real longing after truth. They did not persecute; they had not earnestness enough for that. But mockery and indifference were more painful to St. Paul than danger and suffering. He could not feel at home in Athens. And he was one of those men to whom sympathy is almost a necessity; his one earthly comfort was the society of Christian friends. This Epistle shows the intensity of his affections; he can scarcely find words strong enough to express his love for the Thessalonians, his yearning desire to see them again. Yet he had spent only three weeks, or perhaps a short time longer, at Thessalonica. How, then, must he have prized the society of Timotheus, the dearest of all his friends! He was his brother, his fellow-labourer; he could ill spare him, especially while labouring in vain, as it seemed, in that most uncongenial place. But he would send him; he would endure that isolation which was so oppressive to him. Even for himself it was better than the cruel uncertainty which he could bear no longer; and the visit of Timotheus would be very useful to the infant Church at Thessalonica. So he thought it good; it pleased him, there was a pleasure mingled with the pain, to be left at Athens alone. There is a pleasure in self-sacrifice, severe but real; there is a peace in the conscious submission of the human will to the blessed will of God—a peace not granted to all, for not all take up the cross, but very precious, very high and holy. 3. *So he sent his closest friend and companion.* His words show how he felt the separation. He describes him as his brother; elsewhere he calls him his son in the faith, his dearly beloved son. His presence, his loving care, his affectionate sympathy, were very dear to St. Paul. His help, too, was very needful; he was the minister of God, St. Paul's fellow-labourer in the gospel (the readings are somewhat confused, but the meaning is plain); he could assist him in his difficult and almost heartless labour at Athens. Like St. Paul, he delighted to serve God, to do God's work, to preach the glad tidings of the atonement, the resurrection of Christ, the life and immortality brought to light by the Lord Jesus. There was work, hard work, enough and more than enough, for both of them at Athens; but St. Paul, in his intense anxiety for the Thessalonians, sent to them his dearest companion and his best helper. Old work must not be neglected for new; it is a common temptation. The care of all the Churches pressed upon St. Paul. The minister of God must care for all the souls entrusted to his charge.

II. THE PURPOSE OF TIMOTHY'S MISSION. 1. *To stablish them.* They were but neophytes—Christians of a few months. The first work of drawing men to take an interest in religion is often easier than the work which follows of stablishing and building them up in the faith. It is hard to persevere; we know it from our own experience. It may be that by God's grace we have drawn nigh to the crucified One; we have felt something of the sweetness of his precious love; our hearts have burned within us as we listened to his voice, "Come unto me." In such moments we have felt, perhaps, that our work was well-nigh done, and our souls saved for ever; we thought that we could never fall from him whom we had learned to love so dearly. But a little while, and we found ourselves miserably disappointed. The time of temptation came; or perhaps, without any definite temptation, the freshness of those glowing feelings passed away; we lost our first love, and sunk back into that cold indifference which we hoped we had shaken off for ever. We lost all that we seemed to have gained; we had to begin our work again. Alas! many are thus always beginning; their spiritual history is a series of oscillations between permitted carelessness and feeble repentance. They make no real progress towards that holiness without which we cannot see God. They need a Timotheus to stablish them. It is one of the most important, one of the most difficult, duties of the ministers of God to persevere themselves, to lead others to persevere. 2. *To comfort them,* or rather, perhaps, to exhort them. They needed both, comfort and exhortation. The cross was coming. They were but babes in Christ; they shrunk from its sharpness. But "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." The grace of perseverance is best acquired in the bracing air of affliction. "The trying of our faith worketh patience." Self-denial, the mortification of the flesh, are, alas! to many of us but empty sounds. They must become realities in our daily lives if we are to be Christians indeed. The sentimental religion of mere poetry and feeling is a weak and sickly exotic; it will never bear the cold blasts of temptation, it will not stand in the evil day. Timotheus was to comfort the Thessalonians in their troubles, to exhort them to patient endurance, that their faith might not fail them, that it might rather grow and increase. 3. *To prepare them for tribulation.* (1) *Afflictions must come.* It is a law of Christ's kingdom. "Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth." The Saviour endured the cross, despising the shame; the Christian must consider him, always "looking unto Jesus." "We are appointed thereunto," St. Paul says; not himself only, but all Christians. It is God's ordinance; it is "the trial of faith, much more precious than of gold." The gold periseth, the faith abideth; it will issue in praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. But "we are appointed thereunto." We must recognize this, and accept it cheerfully as the law of our Christian race. The cross is the very badge and emblem of our religion; the cross is a sacred object in the Christian's eyes; but it will not profit us unless we bear the inner cross, the spiritual cross of self-sacrifice wrought into our souls by the power of God the Holy Ghost. The Lord Jesus bore the cross first; his death upon the cross gave a deep and awful and blessed meaning to the word; it invested the cross with glory and solemn beauty and attractive sweetness. His saints have followed him. One after another they have taken up the cross; they came out of great tribulation. From the quiet rest of paradise their voices seem to float around us yet, telling us of the power of the Saviour's cross and the high rewards of suffering for his sake. "We are appointed thereunto," St. Paul said to the Thessalonians; he does not attempt to hide it from them. They were very young Christians, but, young as they were, they must experience the law of suffering. "Ye knew it," St. Paul says; for they knew the blessed story of the cross, and they knew the meaning of the cross. The Churches of Macedonia had a great trial of affliction. We are not called to suffer in the same way, but the cross has the same meaning still. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." "We are appointed thereunto." We are not in danger of the martyr's death, but the martyr's spirit is as necessary as ever it was; its essence lies in the prayer which we daily use, "Thy will be done." We must not be moved by these afflictions; they must not be allowed to disquiet us, to disturb the steadfastness of our faith. Affliction is the ordinary atmosphere of the Christian life. (2) *St. Paul had told them this.* When he was with them, short as the time was—three weeks or a little more—he warned them of the coming trials. It was a great help when the time came. As Chrysostom says, if the physician warns his patient of the probable symp-

toms of his disease, he is not so terrified when they come. Thus the Thessalonians were prepared to see the sufferings of St. Paul and his companions—prepared themselves to follow them as they followed Christ. The preacher must not dwell exclusively on the bright side of religion, its beauty and its joys; he must point to the cross; he must prepare himself and his people to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. (3) *But though he had warned them, he was still anxious.* The affliction had come, as he had said. He knew that they were suffering; he felt for them in their trials. Especially he was anxious to know how that newly formed faith of theirs would endure the first shock of persecution. The tempter had tempted them—that was certain. These trials were his work. It was permitted; it was overruled for good, as the event showed. But it came from the same evil one who had tempted Job to curse God, and was foiled then by the patience of that holy man, and now, by the grace of God, vouchsafed to the Thessalonians. But St. Paul did not know the issue. He had heard of the temptation, and with the tender, trembling solicitude of a loving parent he feared—he could not help fearing—lest his labour should prove in vain. Mark, again, his firm belief in the personality of Satan. He knew his malice; he was not ignorant of his devices, and he feared for his children in the faith.

LESSONS. 1. Pray for the love of souls; seek to love souls with a great love, as St. Paul yearned for the salvation of his converts. 2. Be content, like him, to suffer privations for the souls of others. 3. Pray for the grace of perseverance; be distrustful of self; trust only Christ; watch always. 4. Expect afflictions, chastisements; they must come; they form a necessary part of Christian experience; be prepared for them. —B. C. C.

Vers. 6-10.—*The return of Timothy.* I. THE GOOD NEWS. 1. *The faith and charity of the Thessalonians.* This was good tidings to St. Paul. The gospel was good tidings to all who felt the misery of sin, to all who had been distressed by the strange, perplexing mysteries of life. Tidings of a Deliverer, of an atonement, of the gracious help of God's Holy Spirit, of eternal life to come, were full of joy and gladness to the Thessalonians. Out of that first great joy sprang other gifts of joy. The apostles had no greater joy than to hear that their children were walking in the truth. They had so entered into the full meaning of that short prayer, "Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven," that they had learned to share the holy joy wherewith the blessed inhabitants of heaven rejoice over one sinner that repenteth. Good news to them did not mean this or that earthly success, but the growth in grace of Christian souls. Are we thus affected when we hear of the victories of the gospel, of missionary triumphs abroad, of converted sinners, of holy deaths at home? It is a sure index of our spiritual state. If we know ourselves the deep blessedness of communion with God, we shall count it good news indeed when we hear of other souls being drawn into that holy fellowship. The glory of God is the one highest object to which all true Christians look, and each redeemed soul brings new glory and honour to the great Redeemer. The deeper, the purer our joy in the growth of holiness around us, the nearer our approach, while we are yet on earth, to the holy joy of heaven. Timothy brought news that the faith of the Thessalonians had not wavered in the fiery trial, that their charity was living and fervent. It was glad news indeed to St. Paul. 2. *Their remembrance of the apostle.* St. Paul had a tender human heart; he writes these words, as Bengel says, with a fresh joy, with the tenderest love. The steadfastness of their faith was the chief part of the good news; but also their personal love for the apostle was very precious to him. To hear that they loved him still, that they desired greatly to see him, that they remembered his presence, his words, his affection, was very sweet to him.

II. ST. PAUL'S DELIGHT. 1. *He was comforted.* He had need of comfort and encouragement. Since he left Thessalonica he had met with great perplexities and disappointments at Athens; and now at Corinth he was working amid many difficulties, much harassed by the persecutions of the Jews, toiling hard for his daily bread. He tells them of his necessities, of his affliction. But now he was comforted; and it was their faith that brought him comfort, that encouraged him in his work. How these words must have pleased the Thessalonians, who so loved the apostle! To hear of their faith was good tidings to him; to be told that that faith had given him such deep comfort in his troubles must have been good news to them. 2. *Their perseverance*

gave him new life. He knew what it was to die daily, to bear about always in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. But if death, as he says, was working in him, there was a new life that more than balanced it; a new life, full of warm, glowing feelings, full of high hopes and eager aspirations. And that life was nourished and sustained by the continued progress of the gospel. The tidings of their faith gave him a sense of life, a spiritual energy, a joy analogous to that joy in the mere sense of living which we experience sometimes in the bloom of youth and health. But his joy was wholly spiritual; the life of Christ in other souls seemed to stimulate the energies of the same Divine life in himself; he felt the water of life within him springing up with renewed freshness, as he listened to the glad words of Timotheus telling him how the Thessalonians were standing fast in the Lord. They were *in* the Lord, as he was—in the sphere of his gracious presence, of his Divine working; and to be in the Lord is life, for he is the Life. Spiritual life consists in union with him, without whom we can do nothing. The Thessalonian Christians were in him; so was St. Paul. Their life and his life came from the same Source. The knowledge of their faith and love, their spiritual life, quickened the Divine life that lived in him.

III. HIS THANKSGIVING. 1. *He thanks God for them.* He regards thanksgiving as a return due to Almighty God for his mercies. So the psalmist, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me?" He fulfils his own precept, "In everything give thanks." Thanksgiving is the outflow of a loving heart. The love of God is the very essence of religion; and the more we love him, the more fervent will be our thanksgivings. St. Paul thanks God for the Thessalonians, for their faith and love: for faith and love come from God, who is the Object of faith, who alone can increase our faith; who is Love, from whom, the highest Love, cometh all pure and holy love. 2. *He thanks God for his own joy.* Holy joy is the fruit of the Spirit, the gift of the Spirit, the foretaste of the joy of heaven; it must issue in thanksgiving. St. Paul's joy was full and complete. He thanks God for *all* the joy wherewith he was joying. There were no shadows to darken its brightness; he had heard of no backslidings among the Thessalonians. And it was pure; it could bear the all-seeing eye of God. "We joy before our God," he says. There was no element of selfishness, no earthly pride, no lower motive, to defile it. Such joy in the salvation of souls is indeed heavenly; it is like the ineffable joy wherewith the blessed rejoice before the throne. 3. *He adds prayer to his thanksgiving.* Prayer and thanksgiving ever go together; they act and react upon one another. Prayer leads to thanksgiving; thanksgiving lends increasing energy to prayer. (1) He prayed night and day. The quiet of the night is a time for holy thoughts. The psalmist thought of the Name of God in the night season, and received comfort. The Christian prays; he watches with Christ as he lies yet awake on his bed. He prayed night and day. While working at his daily labour, the hard work of weaving the goats' hair, he ever prayed. So it is with Christians now. They

"Ply their daily task with busier feet,
Because their secret souls some holy strain repeat."

(2) He prayed exceedingly. "Above measure," the words mean literally. The more we pray, the more we love prayer. The prayers of the Christian increase in fervour, in earnestness, and in delight, the nearer he draws to God. Prayer occupies more and more of his time; it tends to assume more and more its proper place as the great work of life, the most important part of each day's business. St. Paul's love for the Thessalonians deepened the importunity of his intercession. (3) He prayed that he might see their face. To see a good man's face, to hear his voice, to touch his hand, is a source of true pleasure. St. John trusted to speak face to face with his Christian friends, "that our joy," he says, "may be full." So was it with St. Paul. (4) That he might be enabled to do them good. He had been but a very short time with them. He wished to give them further instruction, to fill up what was lacking in their knowledge. Christians may be living near to God, but there is always room for further advance in knowledge and in holiness. A saint of God like St. Paul can always do us good.

Learn: 1. To rejoice in the spiritual progress of others. 2. To thank God for it. 3. To take delight in intercourse with holy men.—B. C. C.

Vers. 11—13.—*St. Paul's prayer for his converts.* I. GOD HIMSELF IS THE ONLY GIVER OF ALL GOOD THINGS. 1. *He can give the apostle and his converts the great joy of another meeting.* The Thessalonians might be zealous in their religious duties; St. Paul might pray exceedingly, above measure; but it is God himself, not any creature, from whom all goodness flows. The word *autós* ("himself") is emphatic. He only can save; He only is the Giver of joy. He is our God, therefore he is able; he is our Father, therefore he is willing to help us. His is the kingdom and the power and the glory, and he loves us with a Father's love. The apostle adds the Saviour's Name: "God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ." He addresses Christ in the language of direct prayer. He uses, too, a verb in the singular number. There can be no satisfactory explanation of this, save that furnished by our Lord's own words, "I and my Father are one." From him only, the Triune God, cometh every blessing. He can bring St. Paul again to the Thessalonians. He will, if it is good for him and for them. 2. *He can increase in them the great grace of charity.* Love is the chiefest of all graces; it expels all manner of sin little by little from the heart which it fills; it consumes selfishness little by little with its heavenly fire. It must abound in the Christian's heart, for it is the best of all treasures; it must be fervent, intense, for lukewarmness is hateful to the Lord. It must be wide in its range; for that love which rests on some men because they are agreeable, and excludes others because they do not please, is merely human; not of God—mere natural affection; not the precious grace of holy love. God loved the world; the measure of his love is the gift of his Son. His saints in their poor way must imitate him. He only can make them abound in love; for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. Love is the best gift of the good Spirit of God. We must covet earnestly that great grace, and seek it from him of whose only gift it cometh.

II. GOD CAN FULFIL THE GOOD WORK WHICH HE BEGAN. 1. *Holiness comes from him.* Without holiness no man shall see the Lord; and it is God the Holy Ghost who sanctifieth the elect people of God. He can cleanse the thoughts of the heart by his Divine inspiration. He can make the soul that was unclean pure and blameless. We must listen to his voice speaking in our hearts. He checks us when we are tempted to sin; he calls us ever onwards to holiness, to self-consecration, to closer union with Christ. It is our part to recognize his awful presence, to shrink with godly fear from grieving the indwelling Spirit, to make silence in our hearts to listen to his voice, to pray with ever-deepening earnestness, "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth." 2. *He can enable us to persevere.* The psalmist says, "O God, my heart is fixed, my heart is fixed." That fixedness, that establishment of the heart in holiness, cometh from God; it is his gift. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee." We need to be rooted and grounded in love, to be strengthened with all might by his Spirit in the inner man. Then we shall persevere unto the end; then we shall be found unblamable in holiness at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints. St. Paul ever looked forward to that second coming; it filled the whole range of his hopes. So ought Christians now to live, "looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God."

LESSONS. 1. St. Paul prays that God would direct his way to Thessalonica. We may pray for the great blessing of intercourse with those whom we love; but it must be "in the Lord," in humble submission to his will. 2. But above all things we should pray for their continued growth in grace and holiness, in preparation for the coming of the Lord.—B. C. C.

Vers. 1—13.—The subject is still *great desire to see the Thessalonians.* I. PAUL ALONE AT ATHENS. "Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left behind at Athens alone." There is continued the use of the plural; but it is to be regarded as corrected by the use of the singular in the fifth verse. The correction relates to the mission of Timothy, which is to be understood as covering Paul's being left behind at Athens. For want of full materials it is difficult to understand the bearing of what is said in the Acts of the Apostles on what is said here. But the most probable account of matters seems to be the following. Silas and Timothy were left behind at Berea. They that conducted Paul from Berea brought him as far as Athens; and immediately returned with a commandment unto Silas and Timothy

that they should come to him with all speed. Here comes in the link which is given here: Wherefore (*i.e.* on account of his endeavour to see the Thessalonians having twice proved abortive) when he could no longer forbear (*i.e.* when he was necessitated to give some relief to his feeling of being orphaned), he thought it good to be left behind at Athens alone. This was a change of plan, but arising out of the very best feeling. He sent on to Berea a second commandment, that Timothy should proceed to Thessalonica before joining him, Silas meantime remaining at Berea. In that case Paul was *really* left behind at Athens, though not with the greatest literalism. He was left behind from the point of view of Timothy going on to Thessalonica, and also of his intention to have had Silas and Timothy with him at Athens. It was the *being alone* at Athens that made him think of sending for Silas and Timothy, while his conductors from Berea had not yet left. He felt the atmosphere to be so oppressive beyond his expectations that he longed for their fellowship. And while he was waiting for them, as we learn from the Acts of the Apostles, the feeling did not abate. He went forth into this beautiful city which was associated with the greatest intellectual refinement. And, though a man of gigantic intellect, he was not attracted to the study of its works of art or philosophies. No, it was the gospel sandals with which his feet were shod. It was in the light of Christ that he contemplated the city. Its principal works of art were temples. There on the Areopagus was a temple of Mars, with the subterranean sanctuary of the Furies. On the prominent Acropolis was the Parthenon, or temple of Athene, the protectress of the city, and, next to it in magnificence, the Erechtheum with its presiding deities. A third rock was associated with Jove. There was an altar of Prometheus within the groves of the Academy; the Lyceum was dedicated to Apollo. At every turn were structures connected with idolatrous worship, and, among the many, the eye of the apostle detected an altar with this inscription, "To the Unknown God," from which he afterwards took occasion to preach to the Athenians some of the elementary truths of religion. It was while alone in this city *full of idols*, oppressed by its false forms of religion, that he longed for Silas and Timothy to come on to him. But, strong as his desire for their fellowship was, it was soon overmastered by another, *viz.* desire toward the Thessalonians, for the gratification of which he was willing to make sacrifice by remaining alone at Athens.

II. MISSION OF TIMOTHY WITH REFERENCE TO THE THESSALONIANS. "And sent Timothy, our brother and God's minister in the gospel of Christ." Timothy is sometimes called Paul's son; he is here called his brother. He was a son who had already grown up to be a companion and associate in work. He was one to whom Paul gave commandment, yet it was properly to God that he stood or fell. The sphere in which he ministered to God was the gospel of Christ. It was his duty generally to bring the gospel of Christ to the wants of men. But let us think of it as his duty specially to bring the gospel of Christ to the wants of the Thessalonians. 1. *Timothy was to seek to influence them against their being moved by the pressing afflictions.* "To establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith; that no man be moved by these afflictions." The afflictions, not confined to the Thessalonians, but having the first reference to them, are regarded as present. It was Thessalonian afflictions that forced Paul to leave Thessalonica much sooner than he had intended. It was in a manner Thessalonian afflictions that followed him to Berea. At the time of sending Timothy he may have had late information of the things suffered by the Thessalonians of their own countrymen. By *indications*, then, he could only think of the afflictions as what might any moment be experienced by them. In consequence of these afflictions Timothy was sent to *establish* them. It was work which might expose him to the attacks of the virulent Jews of Thessalonica; and this establishing work is usually committed to older men. But that by which he was himself established was his message. And it was to this that he was to look for establishing the Thessalonians. He was to exhort them (not comfort them) concerning their faith, that no man should be moved by these afflictions. He was to hold up persuasively before them the gospel of Christ, that their faith thereby being strengthened, they might be kept from apostatizing. 2. *There was reason for their not being moved by the afflictions.* "For yourselves know that hereunto we are appointed. For verily, when we were with you, we told you beforehand that we are to suffer affliction; even as it came to pass, and ye know." The Thessalonians, and Paul as well, and not they alone, were appointed to suffer affliction.

It was the sovereign, all-wise decree of God that, through the affliction of his people, the gospel was to be spread abroad, and transmitted to future generations. And that was a reason why they were not to be moved in affliction. They were not being made the sport of chance, or simply left to the will of their enemies; but they were submitting to the reasonable necessary appointment of their heavenly Father, and that along with others. The Thessalonians were well acquainted with this doctrine. It had been taught them by Paul, when he was with them. And in this he was simply following the great Teacher. It was impossible for him to hold out false expectations. He told them whom he asked to enter into his service that they were to count the cost; they might be called even to lay down their lives for his sake. And at the last he recurs to this in speaking to his disciples. "If the world hateth you, ye know that it hath hated me before it hated you. . . . Remember the word that I said unto you, A servant is not greater than his lord. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also. . . . These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be made to stumble. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you shall think that he offereth service unto God. And these things will they do, because they have not known the Father, nor me. But these things have I spoken unto you, that when their hour is come, ye may remember them, how that I told you." As Paul, after the Master, taught, so it came to pass, and so they had experience. Being thus prepared beforehand, their affliction, instead of shaking them, was fitted to have a confirming effect upon them.

III. MISSION OF TIMOTHY WITH REFERENCE TO PAUL. "For this cause I also, when I could no longer forbear, sent that I might know your faith, lest by any means the tempter had tempted you, and our labour should be in vain." It seems best to connect "also" with "sent," as is grammatically allowable. He sent not merely for the sake of the Thessalonians, but also for his own sake. The affliction was a special reason why he, Paul (the singular being introduced), could no longer forbear. He wanted information regarding their faith. Connected with this was anxiety. As a fact, the tempter had tempted them. God tempteth no man; he seeks only through affliction to make his people conquerors. Through affliction Satan, according to his nature, had sought to seduce the Thessalonians to apostasy. And it might be that by some means (for he is fertile in means) he had succeeded in his nefarious object. In that case his labour among the Thessalonians, and laborious praying for them, in all of which he had a natural interest before God, would be vain. It would be as if his lot had never been cast among them. Wishing, then, to have his mind relieved from this state of anxiety, he had sent on Timothy.

IV. GOOD NEWS FROM THESSALONICA. "But when Timothy came even now unto us from you, and brought us glad tidings." Paul had meantime gone on from Athens to Corinth, where, according to Acts xviii. 5, he was joined by Silas and Timothy. He lost no time in writing to Thessalonica after their arrival. Timothy, who seems not to have delayed by the way, was the bringer of good news, of a kind of gospel—being, indeed, tidings of the fruit of the gospel. He announced what the gospel had wrought for the Thessalonians in three particulars. 1. "Of your faith." Timothy was able to tell his master, by whom he had been sent, that they had such a hold upon the Divine help, that they were able to stand against the assaults of their enemies. 2. "And love." He had also this good news to tell Paul, that, in the face of opposition, they were not weakened by division, but were only drawn the closer together in the bonds of Christian love. 3. "And that ye have good remembrance of us always, longing to see us, even as we also to see you." He had the further tidings to convey, that they had a lively impression of all he had been to them—to whom, under God, more than to any other, they owed their existence as a Church. His name was a savour of a sweet smell among them. *At all times* they thought of him with pleasure. And as it had been told them that he had a longing to see them, so they wished it to be told him that they had a longing to see again the face, and not less to hear again the voice, of their teacher.

V. COMFORT IMPARTED BY THE GOOD NEWS. "For this cause, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our distress and affliction through your faith: for now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord." "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news

from a far country." When Jacob knew that Joseph was alive, his spirit revived. Paul had not a little of distress and affliction, of trouble from without, that was straitening and oppressive, at Corinth as elsewhere; but, when the good news came regarding his Thessalonian converts, he forgot his distress and affliction. He was comforted over them, in his brooding love. What in them specially communicated comfort to him was their faith, *i.e.* the faith which enabled them to stand fast in the Lord. So dependent was he on them for happiness, that he only truly lived, had life in its vigour and elasticity, if he could think of them as standing fast in the Lord. While he thus acknowledges their steadfastness in the past, he gently appeals to them to remain steadfast in the future. Let them not take away the condition of his happiness. A Christian parent is dependent for his happiness on the conduct of his children. If he hears of them, when on going out into the world they come to their trial, as departing from the Lord, then his spirit is crushed. But if he hears a good report of them as standing fast in the Lord (in his strength and purpose), then his bones are made fat. And so is it with a Christian minister and his people.

VI. THANKSGIVING ON ACCOUNT OF THE GOOD NEWS. "For what thanksgiving can we render again unto God for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God?" The good news, the glad tidings, filled the apostle's heart with joy. There is an unhallowed joy which is not worthy of the name of joy. Not connected with a recognition of God, not in accordance with God's laws, it cannot bear the Divine inspection. The joy of the apostle for his Thessalonian converts was not of this nature. It extended over a wide range, but over all the range he joyed for them before God. It was not joy away from God, but joy to which he could ask God to be privy, as being joy in their Christian state, especially in their Christian steadfastness. This pure joy, which was his life, the apostle poured forth in thanksgiving. It was God alone who had made their mountain to stand strong; to him, therefore, was due all the praise. Thanksgiving is a *return* which God desires from us for his mercies. And we must often feel, with the apostle, that we cannot make a sufficient return in this form for mercies bestowed upon ourselves and upon others.

"Through all eternity to thee
A joyful song I'll raise;
For, oh! eternity's too short
To utter all thy praise."

VII. PRAYER WITH WHICH THE THANKSGIVING IS BLENDED. "Night and day praying exceedingly." He gave thanks when he prayed, and that was night and day. He borrowed from both, which is suggestive of morning and evening as fitting seasons for the duty of prayer. How fitting that in the morning we should turn to God and consecrate to him the powers he has renewed! How fitting that before returning to the world, to meet its temptations, to be entrusted with opportunities of usefulness, to meet what Providence has awaiting us,—how fitting that before we take the first step we should implore the favour of him on whom the lot of every day depends! How fitting, too, that in the evening we should thank God for the benefits of the day, that we should seek to be relieved of the burden of its transgressions, and that we should commit ourselves through the night to the keeping of him who neither slumbers nor sleeps! We can understand that the apostle would borrow largely from the night; for, apart from his labours night and day, his prayers here are described as beyond measure. What a rebuke to those who, instead of breaking beyond bounds in the impetuosity of devotion, narrow their prayers within small compass, or omit them altogether! Here we discover the secret of his power; and let us, in this undevout age, go back to his style of praying, without any loss of intensity, beyond bounds. *Two subjects of prayer.* 1. "That we may see your face." It has been said of Paul by James Martineau, that "his ardent and generous soul had fastened itself on no one living object, but on an abstraction, a thing of his own mind, *the truth*;" "that he rested nowhere long enough to feel his nature silently yet irrevocably depositing itself there, but was at all times ready to gather up his feelings and pass on;" that he loved his disciples less in their individual persons and for their own sakes than as depositaries of the truth—as links of a living chain of minds by which that truth would complete its circuit, and find a passage for its renovating power. But it is difficult to know what

personal attachment is, if there are not the marks of it in Paul. Did he merely gather up his feelings and pass on, when he was driven by persecution from Thessalonica? No; the Thessalonians, in the short time, had obtained a place in his heart, which was not transient, which they have to this day in heaven. And night and day, when he was away, they came up before him in his audience with God; and what, going beyond bounds, he asked was partly this—that he might see their face. He wished to have fellowship with them, soul with soul, such as is best promoted by direct personal intercourse. That he embraced so many in his affection, that he could not give them more time individually, did not make his attachment less truly personal. 2. “And may perfect that which is lacking in your faith.” It is true that Paul had an object beyond seeing their face, and that was that he might the better impart to them spiritual benefit. But is that attaching importance to the person only as a home for the truth? If so, then it is what should be true of all affection. The more ardently we love persons, the more should we love them not as mere earthly beings, but rather as having a heavenly constitution, as those in whom it is fitting that the truth should have a resting-place and home. The more we love to see their face, the more we should seek to perfect that which is lacking in their faith. Paul meant no reflection on the Thessalonians, who were little more than beginners as believers. It was not to be expected that they had come up to the full measure of faith. They had stood the tests to which they had been put, but there might be stronger tests coming. Neither they nor he had come up to the full-measured faith of the Master, who had stood even the forsaking of the Father. Privileged to come among them, he could only hope to be helpful in making up the deficiencies of their faith by a fuller and more earnest exhibition of gospel truth.

VIII. PRAYER THROWN INTO FORM TO BE OVERHEARD BY GOD. *Two petitions corresponding to the two subjects of prayer.* 1. “Now may our God and Father himself, and the Lord Jesus, direct our way unto you.” Paul prayed to have his way directed unto the Thessalonians. In the same way the servant of Abraham prayed to have his way prospered in the obtaining of a wife for Isaac. We may learn that we are to make even external arrangements subjects of prayer. “Our God and Father himself . . . direct our way unto you.” Satan, with his misanthropic qualities, twice succeeded in hindering him in his endeavours to proceed to Thessalonica. He looks above his own feeble endeavours and the hinderings of Satan, to God, in his almightiness and fatherliness, himself to direct his way unto the Thessalonians. “The Lord Jesus direct our way unto you.” We may learn that it is right to pray to Christ, though it is more usual to pray to the Father through Christ. The way of his servants, even the external way, is in his sovereign hands. We must not forget that he controls all things in heaven and in earth. In this verse there is a most remarkable enallage of number—two nominatives followed, not by a plural, but by a singular verb. It is one of the most striking proofs in Scripture, all the more that it comes in incidentally, of the absolute unity of the Father and the Son. It was made effective use of by Athanasius, in his case against Arius. 2. (1) *More immediately.* “And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and to all men, even as we also do toward you.” If there is any distinction between the two main verbs here, it is that the first refers more to range, the second to degree. It is implied that the Thessalonians already increased and abounded in love; still there was room for higher things. “Whether I come or no, the Lord make you to increase and abound in love.” They were to increase and abound in love one toward another (within the Christian circle at Thessalonica), and toward all men (the wider Christian circle, and, beyond it, the world lying in wickedness). This is in conformity with what Peter says, that to brotherly kindness we are to add charity. There is a concentration of our affections in our home. But we are not selfishly to confine them there; rather are we to get there refreshment for a wider circle. So there is a concentration of our affections in the Church or enlarged home. But we are not to make it a close guild; rather, in its refreshing fellowship, are we to be fitted for embracing in our affection the whole world. The apostle supports his petition by his own example. It is literally, “even as we also toward you.” And it is better to leave it thus indefinite, that Paul’s example may extend over past and present. He was not one who had confined his affections to any narrow circle; but they had gone out toward them in Thessalonica, and were still going out. It is true that, when the truth finds a home in a person, there is a look beyond him to its

finding a home by him in others. And the more truly and deeply we are attached to men as persons, the more shall we with Paul feel prompted to view them as appointed for the transmission of the truth. (2) *Ultimately*. "To the end he may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints." By the stabilising of our hearts we are to understand our being made proof in our inmost being against temptation, our being placed above the reach of a fall. This is to be brought about by love proceeding from faith. As love is said to be the fulfilling of the Law, and the bond of perfection, so it is here viewed as consummating our establishment. We are to be established, so as to be in the sphere of holiness, sanctify without blame, and that under the searching yet loving eye of God. Such a consummation seems far beyond us at present; but it will be realized for us at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints. His power over the evil of our hearts, through His blood and Spirit, will then be fully manifested. With imperfect holiness now, then we shall be saints indeed. And as Christ's saints, the trophies of his power, we shall attend on him at his coming, and swell the majesty of his train. Let us, then, give love the sweep of our being, to the dislodging of sin, to the incoming of saintliness, that in Christ's day of triumph we may be, with the saints, in his train.—R. F.

Ver. 5.—*How the work of the gospel may be frustrated by temptation.* St. Paul has just referred to the external hindrance to his journeying that Satan was able to throw across his path (ch. ii. 18). He now writes of a much more serious Satanic opposition in the temptation of his converts to unfaithfulness. He is anxious lest during his absence the fierce enmity of the Jews, either by some more violent attack on the Church or by the harassing of incessant petty persecution, may at length have broken down the fidelity of the Christians at Thessalonica. And he shows his anxiety by sending to inquire of the state of the Thessalonian Church. The danger in which these Greek Christians lay besets the people of God in all ages, though the form in which it presents itself varies considerably.

I. THE TEMPTER RAISES UP TEMPTATIONS IN ORDER TO FRUSTRATE THE WORK OF THE GOSPEL. 1. *The tempter furnishes temptations.* A temptation implies two things: (1) a latent appetite or desire in the mind of the tempted, which appetite or desire may be natural or acquired, innocent or corrupt, such as the innate instinct of self-preservation or the artificial craving for strong drink; and (2) external circumstances that tend to rouse the internal longing. Now, the tempter may work through either of these two elements of temptation. He may sway the mind towards certain thoughts and impulses, or he may present to the mind occasions of sin by bringing about an arrangement of circumstances which shall appeal to the internal desire in such a way that indulgence would be unlawful. Thus dangers appeal to the instinct of self-pervations and forbidden delights to the love of pleasure. 2. *These temptations tend to frustrate the work of the gospel.* All is undone if the Church proves unfaithful. High knowledge may be acquired, elaborate organization may be perfected, busy work may be accomplished, and yet, if the purity of the spiritual life is invaded, or the faithfulness that should mark the soldier of Christ corrupted, the labour that led to the happiest results is all in vain.

II. THE TEMPTER CAN ONLY FRUSTRATE THE WORK OF THE GOSPEL WHEN THE TEMPTED YIELD TO TEMPTATION. 1. *The power of the tempter is limited to temptation.* He can persuade; he cannot compel. He may use threats, or he may use cajolery. But he cannot use force. For the violence that is done to the body of the martyr is no violence to his soul, but only a powerful persuasive influence. Satan goes about like a roaring lion. He has a deep throat, but blunt fangs. 2. *We are free to resist temptation.* Temptation cannot destroy free-will. The tempter simply tries to induce us to choose the evil. If we do not choose it, he is powerless. And the decision lies entirely with ourselves. 3. *The grace of God will help us to resist temptation effectually.* We are not left alone to battle with the tempter. If Satan is against us, God is for us. Stronger and greater influences for good are provided for counteracting the evil influences. But these are equally outside our liberty of choice—good persuasion as against bad persuasion. It is for us to lend ourselves to the helpful grace of God in Christ if we are to be strong to resist temptation and to prevent the work of the gospel from being frustrated in us.—W. F. A.

Ver. 8.—*St. Paul's devotion to his converts.* I. A PICTURE OF CHRISTIAN LOVE. St. Paul is intensely devoted to his converts. Their prosperity is his life, their unfaithfulness his death. Love of the brethren is a conspicuous feature in the early Christian character—more conspicuous than, alas! it is in the modern Church. An apostle felt more than a brotherly love for the Churches he had planted. His affection was that of a father for his children. 1. *Christianity promotes care for others.* It is directly opposed to a self-seeking exclusiveness as much in spiritual as in worldly affairs. As it bids a man not simply care for the enriching of himself with material wealth, so it equally forbids him to seek only for the saving of his own soul. The Church of Christ is always required to have in view the object which Ignatius Loyola propounded as the great end of the society of the Jesuits when he wrote, "The end of this society is not only, with the grace of God, to devote ourselves to the salvation and perfection of our own souls, but also, with the same Divine grace, to labour most earnestly for the salvation and perfection of our neighbour." 2. *Christianity binds Christians together in close bonds of affection.* This is its aim, and this is what it does when unhindered by culpable selfishness and coldness. The gospel introduces a new experience into the world. Christian love is quite unlike pagan friendship, being (1) broader; (2) deeper, founded on spiritual union; and (3) warmer.

II. AN INDUCEMENT TO CHRISTIAN FIDELITY. 1. *The inducement is first direct and personal.* St. Paul urges the Thessalonians to be steadfast because he feels his own life to be wrapped up in their fidelity. For his sake, if not for their own, he desires them to resist the temptations that are trying them. No doubt so devoted and affectionate a man as St. Paul would be able to bring great weight of persuasion to bear on his converts by this appeal to their consideration for their spiritual father. A similar influence may be helpful now. If we know one who has laboured, prayed, and watched for our soul, surely the desire not to grieve him at the last by proving all his toil to have been in vain should be a motive for profiting by it. The scholar should feel thus towards his teacher, the child towards his Christian mother; above all, every one of us towards Christ, that his work may not be in vain—that, after all he has suffered for us, he should not be made to suffer by us. 2. *Further, the inducement is general and inferential.* If the steadfastness of the Thessalonians was a matter of such profound concern to St. Paul, it must have been of great importance in itself. Here is a strong reason for not thinking lightly of Christian fidelity. An apostle feels that he lives in the faithfulness of his converts. How supremely necessary must that faithfulness be for them! how supremely necessary must it ever be for the Church!

III. AN EXAMPLE FOR CHRISTIAN WORK. The Church at Thessalonica was faithful. St. Paul was not disappointed in his friends. The secret of this steadfastness may be seen in the spirit of the apostle. He was no perfunctory preacher. Not only was his heart in his work; his heart was with the people to whom he ministered. Their faithfulness and failure were questions of life and death to him. The servant of Christ has here an example of supreme interest. Learning, eloquence, holiness, zeal, all fail without love. The preacher who identifies himself with his people is the most successful in winning them for Christ.—W. F. A.

Ver. 12.—*The increase of love.* I. THE INCREASE OF LOVE IS THE FIRST ESSENTIAL OF CHRISTIAN PROGRESS. St. Paul sets it first and by itself as the root and secret of the blameless holiness before God which he regards as the great consummation of perfection. The Church has too often disregarded this primary note of progress, preferring growth in knowledge, enlarged activity, and more extended influence in the world. But it needs to be seen that the one measure of spiritual prosperity is the degree in which love abounds. The reasons for this honouring of Christian love are apparent. 1. *Love is the most like God of all human experiences.* We are nearest to God when we love one another most. 2. *Love is the most fruitful grace.* It does most good to the world and inspires the best service of God. 3. *Love is the foundation of all other graces.* It opens the eyes of knowledge, and kindles the ardour of zeal, and inspires the life of faith, and breathes holiness into the soul.

II. THIS INCREASE OF LOVE MUST BE IN EXTENT AS WELL AS IN INTENSITY. It is not enough that we have a very warm, passionate devotion if this is confined to a narrow circle. One of the most important features of Christian love, in contradistinction to the

natural kindness of persons of an affectionate disposition, is its breadth. It is not led by fancy and confined to the arbitrary selection of a merely human love. 1. *It begins with Christ.* Though St. Paul does not here express this truth, he implies it. For he is writing to a Christian Church, not to a mixed crowd of men of the world. He assumes devotion to Christ, and seeks for the fruits of it. Now, it is part of the glory of Christianity that it reveals man in his most attractive character when it shows Christ to us. Thus the enthusiasm of humanity is possible, because, first seeing man in Christ, we afterwards learn to see Christ in every man. 2. *It expands into love for all Christians.* The special characteristic of the brotherly love, so much enforced in the New Testament, is that it flows out to Christians as such, irrespective of personal attractiveness or the reverse. Of course we must have our natural affinities and special friendships. Christ had as much. But we must not confine Christian love to such cases. Indeed, the specially Christian character of love is not seen until this love is bestowed upon those who would not have received it had they not been united to us through Christ. 3. *It must extend to all men.* Christian love is not confined to the Christian community. The disciple of Christ is the true philanthropist. It is not simply that in the spirit of Christian universalism we are to endeavour to draw all men within the fold of Christ; we are also to love them while they remain outside it. We are to love them as men. From this we may infer that religious exclusiveness is a sin, that Christian people should take interest in all things human—in the science, art, business, politics, and social and domestic affairs of the world. The progress of our Christian life may be measured by the cheerful sympathy, breadth, and generosity of our humanity.

III. THE INCREASE OF LOVE IS A FRUIT OF DIVINE GRACE. St. Paul prays that the Lord may make the Thessalonians increase and abound in love. 1. *Love is only possible where the hard heart of selfishness has been softened.* It is the work of God's Spirit within us to make this change. God also casts out the impurities which deaden genuine love and the aversions which limit it. 2. *Love springs up in us by contact with the Divine love.* That love must be revealed and "shed abroad in our hearts" in order that our love may be stimulated. 3. *Nevertheless human influences help the development of Christian love.* The apostle referred to his own example: "Even as we do towards you." Christian love is contagious. The study of the lives of men of large-hearted charity is helpful in the overthrowing of our narrow prejudices and the arousing of a broad, strong spirit of loving-kindness.—W. F. A.

Ver. 13.—*Divine culture.* God is carrying on a process of culture with his people, training, educating, and forming them according to his own ideal of humanity. To ignore this process while admitting the merciful kindness of God in other respects is to take a low view both of providence and of Christianity. To recognize it is to do much towards lightening the burdens and the mystery of all this unintelligible life. For pain, temptation, and disappointment can be better borne when we know that the end of God's dealings with us is not our enjoyment of present ease, but our education in character.

I. THE SUBJECT OF DIVINE CULTURE. "Your hearts." The education that secures good habits is a shallow training if it leaves the source and spring of conduct untouched. It may drill; it cannot discipline. Neither is the mere infusion of knowledge, nor even this with the addition of the cultivation of taste and the development of mental energy, the great requisite in God's culture. He aims at renewing and purifying the heart. He is not satisfied with decorous conduct as a mask for a corrupt heart. But, having secured purity of heart, he knows that right conduct will follow. Moreover, if the external act may appear to men questionable, God, reading the heart, accounts his people blameless when the motive is good.

II. THE CHARACTER MOULDED UNDER DIVINE CULTURE. "Unblamable in holiness." 1. It is *holiness*. God does not satisfy himself with the forgiveness of the past; we should not be satisfied with that. He aims at the real and positive holiness of his people. Holiness is more than dutifulness, more than virtue. It includes these human types of goodness, but it goes beyond them. It goes down to thought, affection, and conduct, seeking clean hands and a pure heart. It rises to the character of God himself. Holiness is godlike goodness, as virtue is human goodness. 2. This holiness is

to be *unblamable*. It is to be perfect. It is to stand the test of a searching scrutiny. Yet it is not a barren negative purity. For we may be blamed for sins of omission as much as for sins of transgression. It is the unprofitable servant who is cast into the outer darkness. To be unblamable we must faithfully discharge our trust.

III. THE STANDARD AIMED AT IN DIVINE CULTURE. The holiness is to be unblamable before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints. 1. God is satisfied with no less holiness than such as is *pure in his own sight*. Our standard is low because our conscience is corrupt. The height of God's aim is only to be measured by the loftiness of his own character. Nevertheless, he it remembered, God will expect no more of us than is humanly possible. The gardener aims at producing a perfect flower up to his own ideal, but still only up to his own ideal of what a flower should be; he does not seek in it the properties of animal or man. 2. The test is to be applied at the *coming of Christ with his saints*. They come to judge the world.

IV. THE STABILITY SECURED BY DIVINE CULTURE. "*Stablish your hearts.*" High culture often produces a result which is brief in proportion to its excellence. The forced hot-house flower soon fades. Knowledge acquired simply to meet an examination is quickly forgotten. This is not education. God aims at more than the momentary elevation of rare seasons of grace. He will have a firm and lasting character—a spiritual life which is also an eternal life.

V. THE MEANS EMPLOYED FOR DIVINE CULTURE. Ver. 12 describes this. It is an increasing and abounding love. Holiness springs from love. They greatly err who seek it in the lonely and chill altitudes of an inhuman saintliness. By mutual Christian love, and by a broad, practical love of mankind, we are trained in the purity which may be at last quite blameless, even in the sight of God.—W. F. A.

EXPOSITION.

CHAPTER IV.

CONTENTS.—With this chapter the second portion of the Epistle—its practical application—commences. The apostle exhorts and entreats the Thessalonians to make progress in the Christian life, and to practise those commandments which, when he was with them, he gave them by the authority of Jesus Christ. God had called them to holiness and to the renunciation of their heathen practices. They must especially be on their guard against impurity, to which as Gentiles they were formerly so prone. He who rejected his injunctions rejected, not man, but God, whose commands they were. As they were already taught of God in the active practice of Christian love, so they must abound therein. They must not allow themselves to be led away by excitement, as if the day of Christ were at hand, but with quietness and honesty perform the duties of their earthly calling, and so commend the gospel to unbelievers. And with regard to their anxiety concerning the fate of their deceased friends, they were to be comforted by the thought that the dead in Christ would be no losers at the advent, but would

rise first, and, along with the living, would be caught up to meet the Lord at his coming, and so they shall all be united in one holy fellowship with him.

Ver. 1.—Furthermore; literally, *finally*; *for the rest*—introducing the closing or practical part of the Epistle. The apostle uses the same word elsewhere at the close of his Epistles (comp. 2 Cor. xiii. 1; Eph. vi. 10; Phil. iv. 8; 2 Thess. iii. 1). Then; or rather, *therefore*; connecting this exhortation with the closing verses of the last chapter: In order that you may be established unblamably in holiness at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, you must do your part, you must earnestly strive after holiness. We; to be restricted to Paul. Beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus; or rather, *in the Lord Jesus*; that is, in fellowship with him—the sphere or element within which the apostle besought and exhorted the Thessalonians. He wrote as the organ or instrument of the Lord Jesus. That as ye have received of us. Paul here appeals to the exhortations which he gave them during his residence among them at Thessalonica. How ye ought to walk and to please God; how you ought to conduct yourselves so as to please God. The walking was the means of pleasing. The R.V., after these words, on the authority of manuscripts, adds, "*even as ye do walk.*" So ye

would abound more and more. The apostle acknowledges their Christian walking; they had already entered upon the road; their conduct was sanctified; but he exhorts them to abound therein with still greater care and fidelity.

Ver. 2.—For ye know; appealing to their memory in confirmation of what he had said. What commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus; or, *through the Lord Jesus*; that is, not merely by his authority, but by means of him, so that these commandments did not proceed from Paul, but from the Lord Jesus himself. We have here, and indeed in this chapter throughout, an assertion of the inspiration of the apostle: the commandments which he gave to the Thessalonians were the commandments of the Lord Jesus.

Ver. 3.—For this is the will of God. The phrase, “the will of God,” has two significations in Scripture: the one is the determination of God—his decree; the other is his desire, that in which he delights—a will, however, which may be frustrated by the perversity of his creatures. It is in this latter sense that the word is here employed. Even your sanctification; complete consecration; holiness taken in its most general sense. Our holiness is the great design of Christ’s death, and is the revealed will of God. Some (Olshausen, Lünemann) restrict the term to moral purity, and consider the next clause as its explanation (comp. Rom. xii. 1). That ye should abstain from fornication; a vice fearfully prevalent among the heathen, and which, indeed, they hardly regarded as wrong. Especially it was the great sin of Corinth, from which the apostle wrote, the patron goddess of which city was Venus.

Ver. 4.—That every one of you should know how to possess. The word here rendered “possess” rather signifies “acquire.” The R.V. renders the clause, “that each one of you know how to possess himself of;” hence it admits of the translation, “to obtain the mastery over.” His vessel. This word has given rise to a diversity of interpretation. Especially two meanings have been given to it. By some it is supposed to be a figurative expression for “wife,” in which sense the word is used, though rarely, by Hebrew writers. Peter speaks of the wife “as the weaker vessel” (1 Pet. iii. 7). This is the meaning adopted by Augustine, Schott, De Wette, Koch, Hofmann, Lünemann, Riggenbach; and, among English expositors, by Alford, Jowett, Elliott, and Eadie. This meaning is, however, to be rejected as unusual and strange, and unsuitable to what follows in the next verse. The other meaning—“one’s own body”—is more appropriate. Thus Paul says, “We have

this treasure,” namely, the gospel, “in earthen vessels” (2 Cor. iv. 7; comp. also 1 Sam. xxi. 5). The body may well be compared to a vessel, as it contains the soul. This meaning is adopted by Chrysostom, Calvin, Grotius, Bengel, Olshausen, Meyer; and, among English expositors, by Macknight, Conybeare, Bishop Alexander, Wordsworth, and Vaughan. In sanctification and honour. What the apostle here requires is that every one should obtain the mastery over his own body, and that whereas, as Gentiles, they had yielded their members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity, they should now, as Christians, yield their members servants to righteousness unto holiness (Rom. vi. 19).

Ver. 5.—Not in the lust of concupiscence—not in the passion of lust (R.V.)—even as the Gentiles which know not God; and therefore from whom nothing better was to be expected. The moral sense of the heathen was so perverted, and their natures so corrupt, that they looked upon fornication as a thing indifferent.

Ver. 6.—That no man go beyond; or, *transgress*. And defraud; or, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, *oppress*, or, *overreach*; *wrong* (R.V.). His brother. Not an exhortation against dishonesty, or prohibition against all attempts to overreach in usual mutual intercourse, as the words would at first sight seem to imply, and as some consider it (Hofmann, Lünemann, Riggenbach); but, as is evident from the context, a continuation of the former exhortation, a prohibition against impurity. In any matter; or, more properly, *in the matter*, namely, that about which I have been discoursing. “An example of the modest reserve and refined delicacy which characterize the holy apostle’s language in speaking of things which the Gentiles did without shame, and thus, by a chaste bashfulness of words, commending the duty of unblemished purity in deeds” (Wordsworth).¹ Because the Lord is the Avenger of all such; either of all such as are thus defrauded or of all such sinful practices. As we also have forewarned you and testified.

Ver. 7.—For God hath not called us unto; or, *for the purpose of*. Uncleanness; moral uncleanness in general (comp. 1 Cor. vi. 15). But unto; or, *in*; *in a state of*. Holiness; or *sanctification*; the same word as in the third verse; so that holiness is the whole sphere of our Christian life.

Ver. 8.—He therefore that despiseth; or, as it is in the margin, *rejecteth* (R.V.). What is rejected is either the above commands to moral purity, or the Christian calling to holiness, or, better still, Paul himself, as the

¹ See also Jowett, *in loco*.

organ of God. *Despiseth; or, rejecteth.* Not man; that is, not me, as if the commands were given from myself—were of mere human origin. But God; the Giver of these commands. So also Peter said unto Ananias, "Thou hast not lied unto man, but unto God" (Acts v. 4); and our Lord says, "He that rejecteth you rejecteth me" (Luke x. 16). Who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit. If this is the correct reading, then the apostle here again asserts his own inspiration, and that in the strongest and plainest terms. The best manuscripts, however, read, "who giveth his Holy Spirit unto you" (R.V.)—a strong enforcement of holiness, inasmuch as the Holy Spirit was given them for the express purpose of producing holiness within them.

Ver. 9.—The apostle now proceeds to a new exhortation. But as touching brotherly love. Brotherly love is the love of Christians to Christians, that special affection which believers bear to each other; a virtue which was carried to such perfection in the primitive Church as to call forth the admiration of their heathen adversaries. This virtue is often inculcated in Scripture (Heb. xiii. 1; 1 John iii. 14), and is distinguished from love in general (2 Pet. i. 7). Ye need not that I write unto you; a delicate and gentle reproof. For ye yourselves are taught of God. We are not here to think of the new commandment of brotherly love given by the Saviour, nor on the Divine compassion exciting us to love; but "taught of God" by the influences of the Spirit on their hearts and consciences to love one another.

Ver. 10.—And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia. Not only to those in Thessalonica, but to all believers in your country and neighbourhood. But we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more; that ye make progress in brotherly love—that it increase in purity, in warmth, and in extent.

Ver. 11.—And that ye study; literally, *that ye be ambitious.* To be quiet; to avoid unrest, to live in peace. Worldly ambition excludes quietness and prompts to restlessness; so that the apostle's admonition really is, "that ye be ambitious not to be ambitious." The unrest which disturbed the peace of the Thessalonian Church was not political, but religious; it arose from the excitement naturally occasioned by the entrance of the new feeling of Christianity among them. It would also appear that they were excited by the idea of Christ's immediate advent. This had occasioned disorders, and had caused several to neglect their ordinary business and to give themselves over to an indolent inactivity, so that Christian prudence was overborne (comp. 2 Thess. iii. 6—12). Perhaps, also, the lib-

erality of the richer members of the Church was abused and perverted, so as to promote indolence. And to do your own business; to attend to the duties of your worldly calling, to avoid idleness. And to work with your own hands. From this it would appear that the members of the Thessalonian Church were chiefly composed of the labouring classes. As we commanded you. A precisely similar exhortation is given in the Epistle to the Ephesians: "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good" (Eph. iv. 28).

Ver. 12.—That ye walk honestly; that is, *honourably; seemly.* Toward them that are without; without the pale of the Christian Church, toward those who are not Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, the unbelieving world. So also, in another Epistle, the apostle says, "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without" (Col. iv. 5). That ye may have lack of nothing; either neuter, *of no thing;* or perhaps rather masculine, *of no man;* that ye be under no necessity of asking assistance either from heathens or from fellow-Christians; inasmuch as working with your hands will put you in possession of what is necessary for life; whereas idleness necessarily involves poverty and dependence on others.

Ver. 13.—With this verse the apostle proceeds to another subject, namely, to comfort those who were mourning the death of their friends. It would appear that the Thessalonians were in perplexity and distress concerning the fate of their deceased friends, fearing that these would miss those blessings which they expected Christ to confer at his advent. Their views of the time and nature of the advent and of the future state in general were confused. They expected that Christ would come immediately and establish his kingdom on earth; and consequently they feared that those who had died would be excluded from it. But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren; a phrase often used by the apostle, when he makes a transition to new and important matters (comp. Rom. i. 13; xi. 25; 1 Cor. x. 1; xii. 1; 2 Cor. i. 8). Concerning them which are asleep; or, *are fallen asleep.* The death of believers in the New Testament is frequently called "sleep." "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth" (John xi. 11). Of Stephen it is said that "he fell asleep" (Acts vii. 60). "Many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep" (1 Cor. xi. 30). "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished" (1 Cor. xv. 18). "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed" (1 Cor. xv. 51). "He fell asleep" is a common epitaph on early Christian tombstones. It is to be observed that it is

not of the dead generally that the apostle speaks, but of the dead in Christ, and especially of those members of the Thessalonian Church who had died. **That ye sorrow not.** Some suppose that sorrow for our deceased friends is here utterly prohibited; inasmuch as if we had a firm belief in their blessedness we would rejoice and not mourn. But the sorrow here prohibited is a despairing and an unbelieving sorrow; we are forbidden to sorrow as those who have no hope, no belief in a blessed resurrection. The tears of Jesus at the tomb of Lazarus have authorized and sanctified Christian sorrow. "Paul," observes Calvin, "lifts up the minds of believers to a consideration of the resurrection, lest they should indulge excessive grief on occasion of the death of their relatives, for it were unseemly that there should be no difference between them and unbelievers, who put no end or measure to their grief, for this reason, that in death they recognize nothing but destruction. Those that abuse this testimony so as to establish among Christians stoical indifference, that is, an iron hardness, will find nothing of this nature in Paul's words." **Even as others; literally, as the rest;** namely, the heathen. **Which have no hope;** no hope of immortality beyond death, or no hope of the resurrection. The heathen, with very few exceptions, had no hope of a future life, and hence they mourned over the death of their friends as an irreparable loss. This disconsolate feeling is apparent in their writings (for examples, see Lünemann, Alford, and Jowett, *in loco*).

Ver. 14.—For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again. The apostle's argument proceeds on the supposition that Christ and believers are one body, of which Christ is the Head and believers are the members; and that consequently what happens to the Head must happen to the members. Our knowledge and belief of a future state, and especially of the resurrection, is founded on the resurrection of Christ (comp. 1 Cor. xv. 12—20). **Even so them also which sleep in Jesus; or more literally, through Jesus.** **Will God bring with him;** namely, with Jesus. These words are differently construed. Some read them thus: "Even so them also which sleep will God through Jesus bring with him" (De Wette, Lünemann); but this appears to be an awkward construction; as we must then render the clause, "will God through Jesus bring with Jesus." It is, therefore, better to refer the words, "through Jesus," to the first clause. It is through Jesus that believers fall asleep; it is he who changes the nature of death, for all his people, from being the king of terrors into a quiet and gentle sleep, from which they will awaken to eternal life.

Ver. 15.—For this we say unto you by the

word of the Lord; or rather, *by a word of the Lord.* The apostle does not refer to those portions of the gospel which record our Lord's discourses concerning the last things; nor to some sayings of Christ preserved by tradition; but to a direct revelation made unto himself by the Lord. We know from Scripture that Paul had many such revelations imparted to him (comp. 1 Cor. xi. 23; Gal. i. 11, 12). **That we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord.** These words are the occasion of an important discussion. It has been affirmed that the apostle here asserts that he himself expected to be alive, with the majority of those to whom he was writing, at the Lord's advent; that, according to his expectation, Christ's second coming was close at hand. "Those who are alive and remain" are distinguished from "those who are asleep," and in the former class the apostle includes himself and his readers. And a similar declaration is contained in the First Epistle to the Corinthians: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed" (1 Cor. xv. 51). Such is the view adopted by Grätius, Olshausen, Koch, Neander, Lechler, Baur, Winer, Reuss, Lünemann, Riggenbach; and, among English divines, by Alford, Jowett, Stanley, and Conybeare. Some of them suppose that Paul changed his opinion on this point—that whilst in his earlier Epistles he taught the immediateness of the advent, in his later Epistles he renounced this hope and looked forward to his own departure. There does not seem to be any ground for this opinion. On the contrary, it would appear from the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, written only a few weeks after this Epistle, that Paul did not expect the advent immediately, but mentions a series of events which would intervene before its occurrence (2 Thess. ii. 1—3). And in this Epistle he represses the curiosity of the Thessalonians about the precise time of the advent by telling them that it was beyond the sphere of his teaching (ch. v. 1, 2). We consider, then, that the apostle speaks here as a member of the Christian body, and uses a very common form of expression—that we Christians which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord; but not at all intending to express his confidence that he himself and his converts would be actually alive at the advent. "He spake," says St. Chrysostom, "not of himself, but of Christians who would be alive at the day of judgment." Such is the view adopted by Chrysostom, Calvin, Bengel, Hofmann, Lange, Macknight, Ellicott, Bishop Alexander, Wordsworth, and Vaughan. At the same time, it must be remembered that the time of the advent was expressly concealed (Matt. xxiv. 36; Acts i. 7) and that

it might occur at any period; and, by reason of their proximity to the first advent, the primitive Christians would be deeply impressed with the possibility or even probability of its occurrence in their days. Christians were to be living always in readiness for this great event, and thus it became a matter of expectation. "Strictly speaking, the expectation of the day of the Lord was not a belief, but a necessity in the early Church; clinging as it did to the thought of Christ, it could not bear to be separated from him; it was his absence, not his presence, that the first believers found it hard to realize" (Jowett). Hence Paul might not regard the advent as far removed into the distant future, as wholly impossible to happen in his days, but as an occurrence which might at any time take place; but he did not teach anything definite or certain on the subject.¹ Shall not prevent; go before or anticipate, obtain the preference over, get before, so that those that are asleep might be left behind and fail of the prize. **Them that are asleep;** those who are dead, so that they, the living, should be glorified before them, or perhaps hinder their glorification.

Ver. 16.—For; assigning a reason for the above assertion, "because." **The Lord himself;** not merely the Lord as the chief Person and Actor on that day, in contrast to his saints, but emphatic, "the Lord himself," the Lord in his own proper Person. **Shall descend from heaven;** where the crucified and risen Jesus is now enthroned, seated at the right hand of God. **With a shout;** a word denoting a commanding shout as that of a leader to his host when he leads them into the battle, or of the army when it rushes to the fight. Some refer this shout to what follows—the voice of the archangel and the trump of God; but there are three particulars here mentioned. Others attribute it to Christ himself. **With the voice of the archangel;** or rather, *of an archangel*. There is only one archangel mentioned in Scripture (Jude 9); the word denotes, not "chief angel," but "chief or ruler of the angels." Accordingly, some suppose that Christ himself is here meant, as to him alone, it is asserted, does this title belong; but the Lord and the archangel are here evidently distinguished. Others strangely imagine that the Holy Ghost is here meant. Others fix on the archangel Michael (Jude 9). Christ is represented as accompanied by angels to

the judgment; and it is futile to inquire who this leader of the angels is. **And the trump of God;** even as the trumpet sounded at the giving of the Law from Sinai. Also the advent of Christ to judgment is represented as heralded by the sound of a trumpet (Matt. xxiv. 31; 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52). "We are to recognize three particulars, following each other in rapid succession—the commanding shout of the King himself, the voice of the archangel summoning the other angels, and the trump of God which awakens the dead and collects believers" (Riggenbach). **And the dead in Christ shall rise first.** Some suppose that the reference here is to the first resurrection; that the righteous, "the dead in Christ," shall rise before the wicked, "the dead not in Christ;" and that a thousand years, or the millennium, will intervene between the first and second resurrections (Rev. xx. 4, 5). But this is an entirely erroneous supposition. All that is here asserted is that the dead in Christ shall rise before the living in Christ shall be changed; there is no contrast between the dead in Christ and the dead not in Christ, nor any allusion to the resurrection of the wicked.

Ver. 17.—**Then we which are alive and remain;** or, *are left*; that is, the saints who shall then be found alive on the earth. The apostle classes himself among the living, because he was then alive. **Shall be caught up.** The expression describes the irresistible power with which the saints shall be caught up, perhaps by the ministry of angels. **Together with them;** with the dead in Christ who are raised. **In the clouds.** Our Lord is described as coming to judgment in the clouds of heaven (Matt. xxiv. 30; Rev. i. 7). According to the Old Testament representation, God is described as making the clouds his chariot (Ps. civ. 3). **To meet the Lord;** in his descent from heaven to earth. **In the air.** Not that he shall fix his throne in the air, but that he passes through the air in his descent to the earth. **And so shall we ever be with the Lord;** shall share a blessed eternity in the vision and participation of his glory. The apostle does not here describe the solemnities of the judgment; but stops at the meeting of Christ and his risen saints, because his object was to comfort the Thessalonians under bereavement.

Ver. 18.—**Wherefore comfort one another with these words;** on the ground of that Divine revelation which I have made unto you.

¹ See dissertation on "Paul's Views of the Advent" in the author's 'Introduction to the Pauline Epistles,' pp. 94-106.

HOMILETICS.

Ver. 3, 7.—*Holiness the design of revelation.* Holiness is the end aimed at in all the dispensations of God. (1) God has chosen us before the foundation of the world that we should be holy (Eph. i. 4); (2) Christ gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity (Titus ii. 14); (3) the Holy Spirit is conferred to sanctify us (Titus iii. 5; 2 Thess. ii. 13); (4) the Word is the instrument of sanctification (John xvii. 17); and (5) God chastens us in order that we might be made partakers of his holiness (Heb. xii. 10). In short, holiness is salvation—our restoration to the moral image of God.

Ver. 9.—*Brotherly love.* 1. *Its nature.* It is a love to all believers as believers, as being the children of the same Father, the brethren of the same Saviour, the members of the same family, the sharers of the same grace, and the expectants of the same glorious immortality. To all men we are related by a common humanity, but to Christians we are still more closely related by a common Christianity. 2. *Its manifestations.* It will show itself in acts of kindness done to believers, in preferring their company to that of worldly men, and in conversing with them on religious subjects. 3. *The evidence arising from brotherly love.* It is a proof that we are not of the world, that we love God and that we are Christ's friends and disciples.

Ver. 11.—*Quietness and faithfulness in worldly duties.* 1. *Quietness.* A true Christian is of a quiet and retiring disposition; he shrinks from worldly bustle; he is free from worldly ambition; like the lily of the valley, he loves the shade; he knows that this is not his home, and he looks for a better country, even a heavenly. 2. *Faithfulness.* A true Christian faithfully performs his worldly duties, because he believes them to be assigned him by the Lord; and he labours assiduously at his calling, because he recognizes it as the law of Providence that if any man do not work neither shall he eat.

Ver. 12.—*Honesty.* 1. *Its nature.* We must guard against commercial dishonesty; all attempts to go beyond and defraud our brother; all overestimating what we sell, and underestimating what we buy; all shrinking from the payment of debts; all mean practices to gain customers. 2. *Its importance.* Temptations to dishonesty in this commercial age. Dishonesty combined with religious profession gives occasion to the enemies of God to blaspheme. We must walk honestly toward them that are without. The independence and loftiness of character which honesty imparts.

Ver. 13.—*The death of friends.* 1. *The Christian's sorrow for the death of friends.* All sorrow not here forbidden; only commanded not to sorrow as those who have no hope. The Christian sorrow is a submissive sorrow, which discerns the hand of God; a holy sorrow, which improves the affliction; a disinterested sorrow, which, whilst it mourns over the loss, is comforted at the thoughts of the happiness of the departed; an enlightened sorrow, which looks forward to the future, and regards our separation from our departed friends as being neither final nor complete. 2. *The Christian's improvement of the death of friends.* It teaches us the vanity of the world, the power of religion, and the necessity of preparation for our own death.

Ver. 14.—*Resurrection of believers.* The ground of their resurrection rests on their union to Christ and on his resurrection. Not only are their souls immortal, but their bodies shall be redeemed from the grave. The voice of the archangel and the trump of God will call them from their graves, and, endowed with spiritual bodies, they shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. The resurrection is purely a doctrine of revelation; it formed no part of the religion of nature; the natural analogies which are adduced are defective in essential points.

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Vers. 1, 2.—*The importance of living in harmony with the Divine will.* The practical part of the Epistle begins at this point.

I. MARK THE AFFECTIONATE MANNER OF THE APOSTLE'S ADDRESS. "We beseech you and exhort by the Lord Jesus." He does not speak in the language of command, much less assume the air of a lord over God's heritage, but meekly and affectionately in the way of entreaty. But there was all the force of authority in the very entreaty because it was grounded in the Lord Jesus as its source and element.

II. THE IMPORTANT NATURE OF HIS REQUEST. "That according as ye received from us how ye ought to walk and please God, ye would abound yet more." 1. *It is the duty of a minister to enforce moral duties as well as gospel doctrines.* Scripture knows nothing of antinomianism except to condemn it. It is necessary for ministers to expound duty as well as doctrine. 2. *It is possible to please God in holy walking.* This does not imply that the saints' acceptance depends upon themselves, but that God is pleased with what a believer does in faith from a principle of love, in the grace of Christ, for the Divine glory. "The Lord taketh pleasure in his people." Even when our hearts condemn us, "he upbraideth not" (Jas. i. 5). 3. *It is necessary to increase in godliness.* "So ye would abound yet more." (1) The apostle recognizes their begun sanctification. The best texts add the words, "even as also ye walk." (2) He enforces the necessity of making further increase in holy walking. There must be an "exercising of themselves unto godliness," a resolute "going on unto perfection" in the exercise of every grace, in the discharge of every duty, "perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. vii. 1).

III. ENFORCEMENT OF THE EXHORTATION. "For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus." 1. *The apostle's position was purely ministerial*, for he merely delivered what he had received from the Lord. 2. *The moral duties he enjoins are based in the gospel of Christ*, which supplies the motives to a full-hearted obedience.—T. C.

Ver. 3.—*Sanctification a Divine arrangement.* "For this is God's will, your sanctification." The first duty expressed is personal holiness.

I. THE NATURE OF SANCTIFICATION. 1. *It implies the consecration of all our faculties and powers, both of body and mind, to God's service.* 2. *It implies personal purity in heart and life.* We are to "cleans[e] ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. vii. 1).

II. THE GROUND OF THE EXHORTATION. 1. *It is God's will.* That ought to stimulate to exertion and encourage to prayer. "Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God." 2. *It was the design of Christ's death*; for he "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus ii. 14).

III. THE MEANS OF SANCTIFICATION. 1. *It is by the truth.* "Sanctify them by thy truth: thy Word is truth." 2. *It is by his ordinances.* 3. *It is by his providences.* (Ps. cxix. 71; Heb. xii. 10; Rom. ii. 4.) 4. *It is, above all, by the Spirit of holiness, as its sole Author.*—T. C.

Ver. 3.—*Warning against sins of impurity.* The apostle comes at once to particulars. "That ye should abstain from fornication." Though adultery and incest were crimes among the heathen, fornication was not accounted a sin at all. Therefore we can understand the emphatic place which is assigned to this sin in the synodal letters to the Gentile Churches (Acts xv. 20—29). The Gentiles "walked after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness."

I. CONSIDER THE HEINOUSNESS OF THIS SIN. 1. *It is a sin against God.* So Joseph regarded it (Gen. xxxix. 9). The law to restrain from this sin is grounded in the reason, "For I the Lord am holy" (Lev. xix. 2). The Divine nature which believers share through grace is quite inconsistent with "the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pet. i. 4). This sin is likewise inconsistent with the design of the gospel of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. vii. 1; Eph. iv. 29, 30). 2. *It*

is a sin against our neighbour. This is implied in the seventh commandment. 3. *It is a sin against our own bodies.* (1 Cor. vi. 18.) Sinners dishonour their own bodies (Rom. i. 24). 4. *It is a sin against the soul.* "Whoredom takes away the heart" (Hos. iv. 11).

II. CONSIDER THE FATAL CONSEQUENCES OF THIS SIN. 1. *It wastes the body.* (Job xx. 11.) 2. *It wars against the soul.* (1 Pet. ii. 11.) 3. *It causes shame.* (Prov. vi. 33; Eph. v. 12.) 4. *It entails poverty.* (Prov. vi. 26.) 5. *It excludes from the kingdom of God.* (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10).—T. C.

Vers. 4—8.—*How personal purity is to be maintained.* The sanctification which is God's will requires that "every one of you know how to possess himself of his own vessel in sanctification and honour, not in passion of lust." The vessel is not a wife, but a man's own body. If it meant a wife, it might be said that every man would be bound to marry. The wife is no doubt called the "weaker vessel," the evident meaning of the term of comparison being that the husband is also "a vessel."

I. HOW THE BODY IS TO BE USED. 1. *Negatively.* (1) It is not to be regarded as outside the pale of moral obligation, as antinomian perverters say, basing their error on the words of the apostle, "It is not I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me;" "In me, that is, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing." (2) It is not to be injured or mutilated by asceticism, after Romish example. The apostle condemns "the neglecting of the body" and "the not sparing of the body" (Col. ii. 23). (3) It is not to be made "an instrument of unrighteousness" through sensuality—"not in passion of lust." Sensuality is quite inconsistent with the very idea of sanctification. 2. *Positively.* (1) The body is to be kept under control; the Christian "must know how to possess himself of his own vessel." He "must keep under the body;" he must make it servant and not master, and not allow its natural liberty to run into licentiousness. (2) He must treat it with all due honour—"in sanctification and honour;" (a) because it is God's workmanship, for "we are fearfully and wonderfully made;" (b) because it is "the temple of the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. vi. 19); (c) because it is an heir of the resurrection; (d) because it is, and ought to be, like the believer himself, "a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the Master's use," for the body has much to do in the economy of grace.

II. DISSUASIVES AGAINST PERSONAL IMPURITY. 1. *The knowledge of God received by the Christian ought to guard us against it.* The apostle here attributes Gentile impurity to ignorance of God. "Even as the Gentiles who know not God." The world by wisdom knew not God, was alienated from the life of God, and thus sunk into moral disorder. The apostle shows in the first chapter of Romans how God, as a righteous retribution, gave over the idolatrous Gentiles to all sorts of moral dishonour. 2. *Another dissuasive is the regard we ought to have for a brother's family honour.* "That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in this matter." A breach upon family honour is a far worse offence than any breach upon property. The stain is indelibly deeper. 3. *Another dissuasive is the Divine vengeance.* For "the Lord is the Avenger concerning all these things." If the vengeance does not reach men in this world, it will in the next, where they will have their portion in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. They shall "not inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. vi. 9). 4. *The nature of the Divine call is another dissuasive.* For "God did not call you for uncleanness, but in sanctification." They had received "a holy calling," a "high calling;" and though "called unto liberty," they were "created unto good works." They were "called to be saints;" for God says, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." 5. *Another dissuasive is that the sin involves a despisal of God,* who has given us his Holy Spirit that we may attain to sanctification. "He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit." God has ordered all our family relations, and any dishonour done to them involves a contempt of his authority. We have in this passage God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—interested in man's salvation and holiness.—T. C.

Vers. 9, 10.—*Inculcation of brotherly love.* The apostle next reminds the Thessalonians of the duty of abounding in brotherly love.

I. THE NATURE OF TRUE LOVE. 1. *It is the affection of those who are children of the*

same Father. (Gal. iv. 26.) Members of the same "household of faith" (Gal. vi. 10), "Every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him" (1 John v. 1). 2. *It is a practical love.* "Not in word only, but in deed and in truth" (1 John iii. 18). It showed itself in "labours of love," and especially through the whole of Macedonia. 3. *It was a duty thoroughly understood by believers,* because they were "taught of God to love one another" in both Testaments. 4. *It was the test of regeneration.* (1 John iii. 14.) 5. *It was a token of discipleship.* (John xiii. 35.) 6. *It was essential to the growth of the Church.* (Eph. iv. 16.)

II. THE MOTIVES TO THIS LOVE. 1. *The command of Christ.* (John xiii. 34.) 2. *The example of Christ.* (Eph. v. 2.) 3. *The glory of Christ in the world is promoted by it.* (John xiii. 35.) 4. *It will be a powerful means towards the world's conversion.* (John vii. 21.)

III. THE MANIFESTATION OF THIS LOVE. 1. In bearing one another's burdens (Gal. vi. 2). The Thessalonians several years afterwards showed this spirit, as we see by 2 Cor. viii. 1, 2, toward the Churches of Macedonia. 2. "In honour preferring one another" (Rom. xii. 10). 3. "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another" (Col. iii. 13). 4. "Not suffering sin upon a brother" (Lev. xix. 17).—T. C.

Vers. 11, 12.—*Inculcation of the duty of quiet and honest industry.* "And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you."

I. A WARNING AGAINST THREE INCONSISTENT AND UNPROFITABLE MODES OF LIFE.

1. *They were to guard against a spirit of restlessness.* "That ye study to be quiet." There had, perhaps, arisen an unsettlement of mind on account of their belief in the nearness of Christ's advent, as well as some uneasiness on account of the fate of their deceased brethren. It led to a desultoriness of life little effective for any good end. The apostle, therefore, counsels sedateness and calmness. We ought to live "a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (1 Tim. ii. 2). 2. *They were to guard against a meddling and pragmatistical spirit.* "Do your own business." Love naturally inclines us to "look not on our own things, but also on the things of others" (Phil. ii. 4), but it must not prompt either to the neglect of our own business or to undue interference with that of others. We must not be "busybodies in other men's matters." 3. *They were to guard against idleness.* "Work with your own hands." The converts probably belonged mostly to the artisan class. The belief in the nearness of the advent had unhinged their minds, and led them to neglect the duties of their secular calling. Industry is a commanded duty. "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called" (1 Cor. vii. 20). The Thessalonians needed to be reminded of it, for he had occasion to speak of it in his first visit. Idleness has peculiar temptations.

II. MOTIVES TO THE DISCHARGE OF THESE DUTIES. "That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have need of nothing." 1. *We are to have consideration to the opinion of those without.* They may misjudge us, yet their judgments may be often true. We must not repel them by our inconsistencies of conduct. We must give "none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully" (1 Tim. v. 14). 2. *We are to provide a supply for our own wants,* (1) so as to support ourselves respectably, (2) and to enable us to supply the need of others. Christianity is above all things a self-respecting religion, and has the promise even "of the life that now is." Mendicancy is essentially degrading.—T. C.

Ver. 13.—*Sorrow for the dead.* The apostle next refers to the share of the Christian dead in the coming of Christ, respecting which some misapprehensions seem to have existed at Thessalonica.

I. THE DEATH OF FRIENDS IS A CAUSE OF DEEP SORROW TO SURVIVORS. Such sorrow is instinctive, and is not forbidden by the gospel: for "Jesus wept" at the grave of Lazarus, and the friends of Stephen "made great lamentation over him." True religion does not destroy, but restrains, natural affections.

II. THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CHRISTIAN AND HEATHEN SORROW. That of the heathen is extravagant, because there is "no hope" in the death of their relatives. It is "the sorrow of the world," which is utterly uncheered by hope. The sorrow of the Christian is sober, and chastened by the hope of the gospel.

III. THE CAUSE OF THESSALONIAN SORROW. 1. *It was not that there was a denial or doubt of the resurrection from the dead, such as existed at Corinth.* 2. *Nor was it that the resurrection was regarded as past already, according to the heresy of Hymenæus and Philetus.* 3. *But it was that it was feared the Christian dead would not be raised to share with the living in the coming glories of the advent.*

IV. THE RESURRECTION HAS CHANGED DEATH INTO A SLEEP. "Those that are asleep." 1. *There is nothing in the word to justify the idea of the soul's unconsciousness in the period between death and resurrection.* 2. *Sleep implies an awaking.* This will occur at the resurrection. Thus the hope of the Church is the hope of the resurrection.

V. THE IMPORTANCE OF EXACT KNOWLEDGE RESPECTING THE FUTURE DESTINY OF THE SAINTS. "I would not have you ignorant." Ignorance of the truth mars our spiritual comfort.—T. C.

Vers. 14, 15.—*Reasons against sorrow for the dead.* The apostle gives several reasons why the Thessalonians ought not to sorrow for their dead.

I. THE FUNDAMENTAL REASON IS THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again." These are the primary facts of Christianity. They are inseparably linked together, for the resurrection was the crown of the redeeming sacrifice; for if he was delivered for our offences, he was raised again for our justification. Deny either or both, we "are yet in our sins."

II. THE SECOND REASON IS, WHEN CHRIST COMES AGAIN FROM THE FATHER'S RIGHT HAND, HE WILL BRING WITH HIM THE SLEEPING SAINTS. "Even so them also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." 1. *The dead saints sleep in Jesus.* They are associated with him both in life and in death. They "die in the Lord;" "they are present with the Lord." 2. *They will accompany Jesus at his second coming.* This includes (1) their resurrection from the dead,—for "he who raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus" (2 Cor. iv. 14); (2) their joining the retinue of Jesus to share his triumph. As risen from the dead, he becomes "the Firstfruits of them that slept."

III. THE THIRD REASON IS THAT THE LIVING SAINTS WILL NOT PRECEDE THE DEAD SAINTS AT THE COMING OF CHRIST. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not precede them which are asleep." This fact would effectively dissipate their sorrow for their departed friends. 1. *It is a fact made known by special revelation.* Such revelations were frequently made to the apostle, as in the case of his special mission field (Acts xxii. 18—21), the position of Gentile saints (Eph. iii. 3), the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. xi. 23), and the reality and proofs of Christ's resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 3). 2. *It is a fact that does not imply either the nearness of the second advent, or the apostle's own share as a living man in its glories.* He says, "We which are alive and remain to the coming of Christ;" he merely identifies the living believers of the last age with himself, as if he said, "Those of us Christians who may be alive at the advent." He could not have believed that he would not die before the advent, for (1) that would imply that "the word of the Lord" had misled him; (2) he actually preferred to be absent from the body, and toward the end of his life spoke of death as "gain," and of his desiring "to depart and be with Christ," words quite inconsistent with this theory; (3) he virtually declares in the Second Epistle that the advent could not happen in his lifetime (2 Thess. ii.); (4) he knew that no man, not even the Son of man, knew the time of the advent (Mark xiii. 42). 3. *It is a fact that the living saints will not get the start of the dead saints in the coming of the Lord.* This is his express revelation from the Lord. "The dead in Christ shall rise first," or before the living are changed (1 Cor. xv.). The Thessalonians need not, therefore, sorrow for their departed friends, neither be afraid themselves to die.—T. C.

Vers. 16—18.—*The order of events at the second advent.* The apostle justifies his statement by a fuller revelation of the truth. He sets forth the order of events.

I. THE DESCENT OF THE LORD FROM HEAVEN. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." 1. *It will be a descent of our personal Lord.* "No phantom, no providential substitute, no vicarious spirit;" the same Person that ascended is he that will descend

2. *It will be a descent with awe-inspiring accompaniments.* (1) "With a signal shout" by the Lord himself, which will be taken up and prolonged by (2) "the voice of the archangel;" for he is to come, "bringing with him all the holy angels" (Matt. xxv. 31); and (3) "the trump of God," for "the trumpet shall sound" (1 Cor. xv. 52), and "he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet" (Matt. xxiv. 31). It is God's trumpet because employed in his heavenly service. It will be the sound of a literal trumpet, like that which was heard upon Sinai (Exod. xix. 16, 19). These various sounds are to herald the descent of the Lord, and to gather the elect together from the four winds of heaven.

II. THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD SAINTS. "And the dead in Christ shall rise first." There is no allusion to the resurrection of the wicked. The apostle is concerned at present with the destinies and glories of a single class. So far from the sainted dead being overlooked, the priority of resurrection is to belong to them.

III. THE CHANGE OF THE LIVING SAINTS. This wonderful transformation is here rather implied than asserted. "For we shall not all die, but we shall be changed" (1 Cor. xv. 51).

IV. THE SIMULTANEOUS ASSUMPTION OF BOTH CLASSES OF SAINTS. "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air." 1. *As one united band, the saints, in spiritualized bodies, will be caught up in clouds*—those "clouds which are his chariot"—just as he himself ascended "in a cloud," and "a cloud received him out of their sight" (Acts i. 9). The new bodies of believers will be able to pass with ease through the air. 2. *The saints will then "meet the Lord in the air"*—not in heaven as he leaves it, nor in earth as he approaches it, but between heaven and earth. The apostle does not say whether they will at once descend to earth and return with him to heaven. He is silent upon the question of the judgment or the entry into final glory.

V. THE PERPETUAL RESIDENCE OF THE SAINTS WITH THE LORD. "And so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1. *It will be a meeting without a parting.* The intercourse begun will have an endless duration. Believers shall "go no more out." 2. *It implies an intimate fellowship with the Lord.* 3. *It will be the fulfilment of our Lord's prayer:* "That they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory" (John xvii. 24).

VI. THE CONSOLATORY INFLUENCE OF ALL THESE TRUTHS. "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Chase away your sorrow; the dead are not lost or forgotten; they shall share in the glories of the advent. There was surely deep and lasting consolation in such truths.—F. C.

Vers. 1, 2.—*Exhortation.* ST. PAUL'S AFFECTIONATE IMPORTUNITY. 1. *He beseeches.* He has finished the personal part of his letter; he has told them of his love, his constant remembrance of them, his prayers for them, his thanksgiving; he has reminded them of the close spiritual ties which bound them to him. Now he beseeches them to persevere. He knows the exceeding difficulty of maintaining a Christian life in this sinful world; he knows the momentous issues that depend on perseverance; he loves his converts with an intense love; therefore he beseeches (comp. 2 Cor. v. 20). He uses all means of persuasion in turns. Now he commands, now he beseeches. Sometimes entreaty is more prevailing than commandment, gentleness than authority. No qualities are more important in the work of the ministry than a genuine love for souls, a real and evident anxiety for the spiritual welfare of our people. St. Paul beseeches; it is an example to all Christian ministers. 2. *He exhorts them in the Lord Jesus.* Christian people need all manner of encouragement, comfort, exhortation. That exhortation prevails which is in the Lord Jesus. His presence, his grace, himself, is the sphere of the Christian's spiritual activity. He who lives habitually in "that fellowship which is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," is best able to lead others to God and heaven. For he who hath the Son hath life. The Lord Jesus is the Life; and he who hath that life himself, hath from the life that abideth in him the warmth, the fervour, the holy enthusiasm, without which religious exhortation has no power, no reality. "In the Lord Jesus." Mark how frequently those words, "in Christ," "in the Lord," are on the lips of St. Paul. It is a constant formula with him. But it is a formula full of life, full of holy meaning. "Not I, Christ liveth in me."

3. *He reminds them of his former teaching.* He had given them a charge, and that through the Lord Jesus. He had received of the Lord that which he delivered unto them. The commandments were not his; they were the commandments of Christ. He had received them from Christ; and through Christ's appointment, guidance, presence, he delivered them to the Thessalonians. He appeals to their recollection. They knew them; they had the knowledge; that knowledge involves a deep and solemn responsibility. The Lord tells us in the Gospel of the condemnation that hangs over the careless servant who knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will. Hence the force of the apostle's words, "Ye know." Much had been given to them, much would be required. It is a warning to be always remembered, to be urged constantly upon ourselves, upon those who are brought in any way under our influence. "Ye know." Knowledge, if it issue in obedience, is exceeding precious; knowledge without obedience involves an awful danger. "Ye know;" therefore we must use that knowledge, that precious talent entrusted to our keeping. The tremendous alternative lies before us—the blessed words, "Well done!" or the sentence that fills the heart with shuddering awe, "Thou wicked and slothful servant!" 4. *He urges them to continual progress.* He had taught them how to walk and to please God. The subject of his practical teaching was how to walk, not how to talk. They must walk in the Spirit, he had told them; their daily life in all its details and circumstances must be guided by the promptings of the Holy Spirit. "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth," is the key-note of the true Christian life. Thus living they would please God. To please God is the highest Christian ambition; the consciousness of pleasing him is the highest Christian joy. But walking implies progress. Standing still is dangerous; it must issue in backsliding. They must go on from strength to strength; they must forget those things that are behind, and press on to those that are before. The grace of God abounds; it is without limit. He giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not. So must the Christian abound more and more in the exercise of the graces communicated to him by God; he must work the works of righteousness with ever-increasing energy, as the grace of God more and more fills his heart.

LESSONS. 1. Do all things in the Name of the Lord Jesus; learn by experience the meaning of those deep words, "in the Lord." 2. Remember that knowledge implies responsibility. 3. Strive to maintain continual progress in all Christian graces, in faith, hope, love, humility, patience.—B. C. O.

Vers. 3—8.—*The law of purity.* I. PURITY OF HEART. 1. *The will of God the rule of the Christian life.* To please God is the strongest desire of the true Christian; and we please him by obedience. The Lord delighteth not in outward observances as he doth in "obeying the voice of the Lord." The Christian's prayer is, "Thy will be done." The standard of that obedience is the obedience of the angels in heaven. It is above our reach; but it is what we are bidden to aim at, what we are told to pray for in our daily prayers. It should be the effort of our lives to lift ourselves up, by the grace of God assisting us, nearer and nearer to that heavenly rule. Without that grace we are helpless; but "I can do all things," says St. Paul, "through him that strengtheneth me." 2. *The will of God is our sanctification.* He willeth that all men should be saved; but salvation is possible only through sanctification; for without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Sanctification is the separation from all that is evil, the entire consecration of the whole man to the service of God, the gradual conforming of the human will to the blessed will of God. Christ is our Sanctification. "He of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification." Faith brings us near to him, and he becomes our Righteousness; then the work of sanctification begins. It is a progressive work, slow and gradual. The more the believer grows in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, the more does that blessed knowledge exert its hallowing power. The beauty of holiness, the sweetness of fellowship with God, the glories of his coming kingdom, are more and more deeply felt. Then, when the affections are set upon things above, and the heart's love is centred upon God, the soul reacheth forth after Christ, longing above all things to be like him, yearning after holiness with a strong, intense desire, eagerly striving to purge itself from the defilement of sin, and to advance ever onwards in the work of sanctification; and that because the Lord Jesus Christ dwelleth there himself, and the pulses of his love beat in the converted heart. He is our Sanctification.

He abideth in his people's heart by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. All holy desires, all good counsels, all just works, come from him—from his inspiring, elevating presence. This is the will of God; this is what God would have us to be. It is a very high and heavenly state; yet in its various degrees it must be by the grace of God within our reach. For he is the God of truth; his promises are not deceitful; his commandments do not mock us with a standard impossible of attainment.

II. PURITY OF LIFE. 1. *Chastity*. The apostle is writing to converts who but a short time before had been heathens. It was necessary to speak very plainly and solemnly on this subject; for the heathen commonly regarded that impurity, which is so great a sin in the sight of God, almost as a thing indifferent. But the will of God is our sanctification, and sanctification involves purity. Without sanctification we cannot see the Lord; but the pure in heart shall see him. God is light; in him is no darkness at all. There is something awful in the stainless purity of the starry heavens. As we gaze into them, we feel ourselves oppressed with an overwhelming sense of our own uncleanness. It is a parable of the ineffable purity of God. In his sight the heavens are not clean. He is of purer eyes than to behold evil; therefore only the pure in heart can see his face. That inner purity covers the whole spiritual life. It implies freedom from all lower motives—all that is selfish, earthly, false, hypocritical; it is that transparency of character which flows from the consciousness of the perpetual presence of God. But that inner purity, which is so large an element in sanctification, involves the perfect purity of the outward life. Religion is not morality, but it cannot exist without morality. It transcends morality, but it implies it. This was not the teaching of the religion which the Thessalonians had abandoned. That admitted immorality. Their very gods were immoral. They were served, not by purity of life, but by sacrifices and outward rites often leading to impurity. Hence the urgency of the apostle's appeal. Amid the evil surroundings of a heathen town, living in an atmosphere of depraved public opinion, new converts were exposed to constant and great dangers. St. Paul reminds them that holiness, without which there is no salvation, is impossible without chastity. Fornication is not, what they once deemed it, a thing indifferent. It is an awful sin against God. Christianity has taught us this. We know it well. We wonder at the light way in which heathen writers speak of abominations which now we shrink from naming. But the sin exists still in terrible strength. It hides itself, indeed; it walketh in the darkness; Christianity has driven it there. But still, alas! it slays its thousands and its ten thousands. It cuts a soul away from God with a fearful rapidity. It fills the man with impure images, unholy desires. It drives out of the heart the thought of God. The soul that is tainted with this foul leprosy cannot pray. It cannot endure the thought of the presence of God in his heart-searching nearness, in his awful purity. Impurity destroys the possibility of the slightest approach to that sanctification without which we cannot see God. Hence the necessity of the apostle's earnest words, "The will of God is your sanctification; and there can be no sanctification if ye live in uncleanness." 2. *Honour*. The unclean life of the heathen cities was full of sin and shame. The Christian life is truly honourable. The Christian's body is a holy thing. It has been dedicated to God. It is "for the Lord" (1 Cor. vi. 13). The Christian must acquire a mastery over it in honour. He must yield his "members as instruments of righteousness unto God." The Christian husband must give honour to his wife. Christian marriage must be honourable, for it is a parable of the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and his Church. The life of holiness and purity is a thing to be honoured. Those who honour holiness honour God, who is the most holy One, the one Fountain of holiness. 3. *The knowledge of God*. The heathens knew not God. They might have known him. He had manifested in the works of creation his eternal power and Godhead. But they did not like to retain God in their knowledge. They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man. Their false gods resembled men, not only in their form, but also in their sins and uncleanness. Men had framed a conception of Deity from their own corrupt nature, and that conception reacted powerfully upon their character. Their gods were like them, and they were like their gods. The Thessalonian Christians had learned a holier knowledge. They must not live like the heathen, who knew not the true and living God. Their knowledge must act upon their life. They must be pure. 4. *Impurity is a sin against man*. "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." Impure desires assume

the form of love; uncleanness usurps and degrades the sacred name of love. The sensual man ruins in body and in soul those whom he professes to love. He uses words of tenderness. He is the most cruel, the deadliest enemy in his wicked selfishness. He cares not for the nearest and holiest ties. He sins against the sanctity of matrimony. He brings misery upon families. Seeking only the gratification of his own wicked lust, he transgresses and wrongs his brethren. But his sin will bring swift punishment upon him. The Lord is the Avenger in all such things. He called us not for uncleanness, but in sanctification. Sanctification is the very sphere in which the new life moves and energizes. Uncleanness is utterly alien to it. The Lord who called us in sanctification will punish with that awful vengeance which belongeth to him all who for their wicked pleasure sin against their brethren. 5. *It is a sin against God.* God hath given us his Holy Spirit. He hath given that great gift "unto you," the apostle says—to you Thessalonians. He gave it once, he is giving it still. It is this great fact which makes uncleanness in Christians a sin of such exceeding awfulness. Their bodies are the temples of God the Holy Ghost. To bring impure thought into that most sacred presence, to defile that body which he has taken to be his Church and shrine, is an outrage, an insult to that Divine Majesty. Such a man hath done despite to the Spirit of grace. Of what punishment shall he be thought worthy? The Spirit of purity cannot abide in an impure heart. He will depart, as he once departed from Saul. There are awful things in Holy Scripture said of those who resist the Holy Ghost, who will not listen to his still small voice speaking in the heart, but continue to vex him by wilful and persistent disobedience, till at last his voice is heard no more, and his gracious influences are quenched. It is enough to fill the thoughtful Christian with shuddering awe when he reflects on that sanctification which the Word of God requires, and contrasts it with the fearful prevalence of sins of impurity.

LESSONS. 1. Long after holiness, pray for it, struggle for it with the deepest yearnings of the heart, the most earnest efforts of the life. 2. Flee from the slightest touch of impurity—the thought, the look, the word. It is a deadly poison, a loathsome serpent; it stingeth unto death. 3. Remember God the Holy Ghost dwells in the Christian's heart. Keep thyself pure.—B. C. C.

Vers. 9—12.—*The law of love.* I. ON ITS POSITIVE SIDE. 1. *It is taught by God.* God is love, and love is of God. The Church of God is the school of love. God himself is the great Teacher. He teaches us by his own example. "So God loved the world, he gave his only Son;" "The Son of God loved me, and gave himself for me." The cross of the Lord Jesus Christ reveals to us the blessed love of God. God the Holy Ghost teaches his people to comprehend with all saints what is the length, and breadth, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. He shows us something of his own blessed love, and bids us learn of him. "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you." We are his disciples, his pupils; we learn of him. What should we learn, if we learn not to love? It is the great task of life. Our lives are wasted if we have not learned that holiest lesson before we die; for heaven is the home of love. There is no place there for the soul that hath not learned to love. God is the Teacher. He had taught the Thessalonians. They did love the brethren. They needed not, the apostle says in his tenderness, a human teacher. 2. *Yet St. Paul exhorts them.* For love is a debt which is never fully paid. The great lesson of love is never fully learned. We are dull scholars. Our natural selfishness keeps us back. We need every incentive, every help. There must be a continual growth. To stand still is to lose ground. We must urge ourselves, we must urge others, to abound more and more. The Lord Jesus is our Example. "As I have loved you," he says. The depth, the purity of that holiest love is altogether above us, out of our reach; we cannot attain unto it. We see its effects in the lives of his saints. We know how the love of Christ constrained the holy apostle St. Paul to live no longer to himself, but to him who died for him and rose again. We despair of ever reaching that high degree of holy love; but it must be the strongest yearning of our hearts to advance continually, to abound more and more.

II. ON ITS NEGATIVE SIDE. 1. *Christian ambition.* Ambition (*φιλοτιμία*) is a common word in Greek ethics and history, a prominent characteristic of Greek political life.

There is a Christian ambition; its object is not to be first in the arena of political strife, but to preach the gospel, to please God, to live a quiet, holy life (compare in the Greek, Rom. xv. 20; 2 Cor. v. 9). Political φιλοτιμία, Bengel says, blushes to be quiet. The Greeks were eager, bustling, restless, each longing to be first. The apostle seeks to turn the ambition of the Thessalonians into another channel. Their ambition should be to be quiet—to keep themselves free, as far as might be, from political excitement and social rivalry, that they might cultivate the inner life of love and peace and communion with God. Love would lead them to abstain from meddling with other men's matters—to do their own duty in the station where God had called them. Love would keep them free from envy and party spirit, and help them to maintain a current of quiet, peaceful thought within their souls. 2. *Christian dignity.* Love would keep them from everything that might bring the gospel into discredit. The Christian has duties towards those who are without. His light must shine before men, that they may be led to glorify him from whom the light cometh. The life of the Thessalonian Christians must be honest, becoming. The apostle insists on the dignity of honest labour. It was little regarded. Educated Greeks and Romans spoke of it as coarse and vulgar. The Lord Jesus worked with his hands, so did St. Paul. Christianity has invested the life of industry with a grace of its own. St. Paul here uses the same word in connection with honest labour which in the Acts of the Apostles is employed to designate the ladies of rank at Berea, the "honourable women" who believed. The Christian must be careful to use words in their true sense. It is not wealth or rank that is truly respectable, but virtue and holiness. Thus living, thus labouring, they would have need of nothing; rather, perhaps, of no man. They would attain that honourable independence which enables one to "look the whole world in the face, for he owes not any man."

LESSONS. 1. Covet earnestly the best gifts; pray for growth in charity. 2. Let your ambition be a Christian ambition; try to be first in humility, first in self-sacrifice, first in the quiet discharge of daily duties. 3. Never despise labour; it was the lot of the Lord Jesus; it has its own moral beauty and dignity.—B. C. C.

Vers. 13—18.—*The resurrection.* I. COMFORT FOR THE SORROWING. 1. *The dead in Christ sleep.* The Lord Jesus Christ hath abolished death; he has changed it into sleep. "She is not dead, but sleepeth," he said of the little daughter of Jairus. The sting of death is sin, but the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. The Lord died and rose again. He died; he encountered the king of terrors in all his awful power; but by his death he hath abolished death to his saints. Stephen fell asleep under the crushing shower of stones. So is it with believers now; they are laid to sleep through Jesus. Through his atonement, through his loving care, through his gracious presence, death is but sleep to them. They die in the Lord; they rest from their labours. They are not unconscious; they do not "sleep idly," for they are blessed; they are "with the Lord, which is far better." Yet that quiet rest of the holy dead in Paradise is as a peaceful slumber compared with the entrancing joy of the glorious resurrection. Yes, they sleep; they have not yet attained unto that perfect consummation and bliss both in body and soul which shall be theirs in God's everlasting glory. There the redeemed of the Lord, perfected in strength and gladness, entranced in the contemplation of the beauty of the Lord, the beatific vision, need rest no longer. "They rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." But now they rest. They are in peace; they are happy, for they are with Christ. 2. *Therefore the Christian's sorrow is full of hope.* We must sorrow when our loved ones fall from our side. The Lord wept over the grave of Lazarus. Not to sorrow would be the hard stern temper of stoicism. The Christian sorrows over the grave, but it is a sorrow chastened by faith, cheered by hope. The heathen might envy the very flowers of the field. "They die, indeed, but it is to spring up again with renewed life and beauty; while man, when he dieth, sleepeth on for ever—a still, silent sleep; he waketh nevermore." Such was the wailing of the heathen poet. It is not so with the Christian. He finds comfort himself, he comforts others, with the blessed words of Holy Scripture. His sorrow is not hopeless, like that of the heathen; he looks for a happy meeting in that blessed place where there is "no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying." 3. *That hope springs out of faith.* We believe that Jesus died and rose

again. The resurrection of Christ is the earnest of our resurrection. He is the First-fruits, the First-begotten from the dead; they that are his shall follow him. The resurrection of Christ was one principal topic of the apostolic preaching; it is now one of the most precious articles of the Christian faith, the very centre of our most cherished hopes. He was seen by many, by Mary Magdalene, by the other holy women, by the apostles, by more than five hundred brethren at once. "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

II. THE COMING OF THE LORD. 1. *Its solemn accompaniments.* He shall come, the Lord Jesus himself, with his holy angels. He shall descend from heaven with a shout. His voice will pierce through the universe; all they that are in the graves shall hear it. The trumpet shall sound. The voice of the trumpet, exceeding loud, filled the people of Israel with trembling at Mount Sinai. More awful by far will be the voice of the archangel and the trump of God that wakes the dead. What that trumpet may be we cannot tell; but sound it will, "for this we say unto you by the word of the Lord." 2. *Its end and purpose.* The dead in Christ shall rise first. They shall hear his voice, though they have lain in their graves, some of them, almost from the beginning. They shall come forth, and that first. Then follows the assumption of the living. Those who are found alive, who have not entered into the deep, quiet rest of Paradise, shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. We shall meet one another; we shall meet him; we shall be for ever with him. "Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

LESSONS. 1. Let sorrow in bereavement be Christian sorrow, softened by faith and hope. 2. The holy dead are at rest. Do not call them "poor;" they are blessed. 3. Let us strive to walk with God now, that we may be ever with the Lord.—B. C. C.

Vers. 1—8.—*Sanctification.* With this chapter commences the hortatory part of the Epistle.

I. EXHORTATION TO ADVANCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH WHAT HAD BEEN DELIVERED TO THEM OF THE DIVINE WILL. "Finally then, brethren, we beseech and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that, as ye received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, even as ye do walk,—that ye abound more and more." The announcement which is made by "finally" of the close of the Epistle is to be taken as meaning that the remaining part is to be taken up with that which is now introduced. There is a natural transition from the prospect of being unblamable in holiness, with which the *personal* part of the Epistle ends, to this *hortatory* part. The exhortation is very affectionate in tone. The Thessalonians are addressed as brethren. And there is not the simple form, "We exhort you," but it is preceded by a less frequent form (only once used by Paul beyond these Epistles to the Thessalonians), "We beseech you," which is the language in which friend earnestly presses home a request on friend. "We exhort you" is more the language in which a teacher earnestly presses home duty on his hearers. "We exhort you" is, moreover, defined and heightened by the addition of the words "in the Lord Jesus." The three Christian teachers found the element of their exhortation, not in themselves, but in him who, as Saviour, has a right to rule all lives. It is implied that the tone of Christ toward us is that of earnest exhortation, in which he perfectly reflects God; for it is said, in 2 Cor. v. 20, that God exhorts, which should have been the translation there. There had been delivered by the teachers to the Thessalonians the knowledge of the true God, and, as they had formerly sought to please their false deities, so, when they came to the knowledge of the true God, it became their duty to please him. There had also been delivered to them how they ought to walk and to please God, *i.e.* to say, this had been presented to them in considerable detail, so that they could readily follow the course of life that was pleasing to God. To their credit it could be said that they were following in their God-pleasing course, and what is pressed home on them is, that they should abound more and more in it. "The Lord make you to abound," is language which has already been used; and this exhortation to abound more and more, which recurs in the tenth verse, may be said to be the watchword given to the Thessalonians. However much we have walked and pleased God, we have not done it enough. Let us abound more and more in the course that is pointed out to us in the Bible as pleasing to God.

II. APPEAL TO THEIR MEMORY IN CONNECTION WITH WHAT HAD BEEN DELIVERED

TO THEM OF THE DIVINE WILL. "For ye know what charge we gave you through the Lord Jesus." There is not a happy change made from "commandments" in the old translation to "charge" in the revised translation here. There is an obscuring of the idea, which is that the Divine will has been delivered in the form of commandments. There were the ten commandments of the moral Law. These, possessed by the Israelites, placed them far in advance of the heathen around them. Coming out of heathenism, it would be a great boon to the Thessalonians to have these fixed in their memory. Presented along with Christian considerations, they would become Christian commandments. There were other Christian commandments, of which we have examples toward the close of the Epistle, which would be reiterated and reinforced until they also were fixed in the memory. In these commandments Paul and Silas and Timothy were only the medium of delivery. Given by the authority of the Lord Jesus, they were to be regarded as his commandments. These being now to be referred to, they are indirectly asked to call them to mind.

III. PURPOSE OF THE DIVINE WILL. 1. *Generally*. "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification." It was affirmed by William of Ockham that "if God had commanded his creatures to hate himself, the hatred of God would ever be the duty of man." It was a violent supposition to make of him, whose will is absolutely wedded to holiness, and who can only command his creatures to be holy. The will of God is here said to be our sanctification. This is a word which is very often used in a passive sense. "Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin and live unto righteousness." The Greek word here has, however, the *active* sense. The way in which we are actively to advance the work of our sanctification, is by yielding up our will to the will of God in all that he requires of us from moment to moment. By abounding more and more in the course that is pleasing to God, we shall more and more die unto sin and live unto righteousness, more and more be made according to the Divine idea, from our inmost life to its most outward manifestation. 2. *Particularly*. (1) *Fornication*. "That ye abstain from fornication; that each one of you know how to possess himself of his own vessel in sanctification and honour, not in the passion of lust, even as the Gentiles which know not God." This is one of the commandments in which the Divine will finds expression. In 1 Cor. vii. 2 marriage is put forward as the *remedial* course against fornication. The form here is, that there can be the *possession* of a wife in consistency with sanctification and honour. This is put in favourable contrast with another possession belonging to Gentilism, possession in the passion of lust, *i.e.* in which the morbid sensual desire acquires the force of a passion. The fact of fornication being so rife in the Gentilism with which they were surrounded, and out of which they had lately come, is the reason why the Thessalonians are specially guarded against it. What was to be accounted for in the Gentiles by their ignorance of God, was not to be excused in them who had been blessed with the knowledge of God. (2) *Adultery*. "That no man transgress, and wrong his brother in the matter." This sin is not named, but only that mentioned in which it differs from the preceding. Being an overreaching and wronging, not a neighbour, but a Christian brother, in the matter involved, it is "doubly flagitious."

IV. WARNING. "Because the Lord is an Avenger in all these things, as also we forewarned you and testified." In Ephesians the warning is, "Let no man deceive you with empty words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience." In Colossians it is similar: "For which things' sake cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience." The idea here is that the Lord is Avenger in all the things that have been referred to. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." As Judge, he is to be thought of as Righter between man and God. When men give themselves up to sensuality, God has a controversy with them. And, by appeal from God against men, Christ comes in as Righter in the controversy, to vindicate the holy character of his Father's laws, to punish for the unholy use of his Father's gifts. From the immediate context we are also led to think of Christ as Righter between man and man. He is the Righter of the slave who is trampled upon without pity by his unlawful owner. He is the Righter of the man who has the purity and peace of his house invaded by the adulterer. When with the Thessalonians, the teachers had made this their teaching clear. In view of

judgment they had warned them, and solemnly testified to them, that these things would not go unpunished.

V. THE HOLY OBJECT OF THEIR CALLING. "For God called us not for uncleanness, but in sanctification." The thought is similar to what is expressed in the third verse. There is this difference, that the will of God there is here connected with a historical point. Let them remember the great turning-point from heathenism to Christianity. Then God graciously called them in the gospel of his Son. And to what did he call them? It was not to a life of uncleanness, but, in keeping with the holy life of Christ, in keeping with the holiness of God vindicated on the cross, it was to find the sphere of their calling in the pursuit of holiness.

VI. THE REJECTER. "Therefore he that rejecteth, rejecteth not man, but God, who giveth his Holy Spirit unto you." This is drawn as a conclusion from the object of their Christian calling. There is not singled out an actual rejecter among the Thessalonians. But, should such a rejecter arise among them, let it be known that he is not a rejecter of man in his interests and rights, but a rejecter of God, who has laid down laws and limits for his creatures. He is especially a rejecter of God, who gives, to those whom he has called in Christ, his Holy Spirit. Sanctification is pre-eminently the Holy Spirit's work. And for any of them to indulge in the sins referred to, would have this as its gravest condemnation, that it was a thwarting and grieving of the Spirit in his holy strivings.—R. F.

Vers. 9—12.—*The Christian circle and accounting by them that are without.* I. BROTHERLY LOVE. 1. *The disposition.* "But concerning love of the brethren ye have no need that one write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." There is a rhetorical touch here which is called "passing over"—not saying what might be said with a view to gaining over. For while it is said, "Ye have no need," the design is more effectually to impress on the Thessalonians the necessity of brotherly love. While they are graciously commended, they are at the same time shown how proper it is for them to love the brethren as being taught of God. Their education in this important department was a reality. To be taught of God does not exclude human help, the help of others, or, as contrasted with that, self-help. Only human help does not avail, unless it is taken up and made effectual by the Holy Spirit. Teachings and experiences must be inwardly interpreted, and made luminous to us. We must therefore stand in an immediate relation to God as his disciples who are taught of him; who, according to another representation, have an anointing from the Holy One to know all things. It is fitting that he who has made our minds, and retains sovereign power over them, should teach us. It is also fitting that he should teach according to his own nature. As Love, he has created us, sustains us in being, earnestly desires our well-being, places us under numberless obligations to him. Shall he not then school us to love? As under the Divine teaching we form a brotherhood of Christian disciples. And this is the only fellowship of minds that is right to the core, that will stand all the tests, that will stand out in eternal permanence. In the brethren there is something of Christian excellence on which to rest our love, and we are to recognize and value and delight in that, even under an uninviting exterior, and, in the name of Christ, to desire its increase and perfectness. 2. *Its manifestation.* "For indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia." An argument has been founded on this statement against the early date of the Epistle; but it tells the other way. For the love is not said to be manifested toward all the brethren, but "toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia;" i.e. to say, its manifestation was yet limited to the Christian circle nearest to the Thessalonians. We are to think of Philippi, a hundred miles distant on the one side, and Berea, twenty miles on the other. To the Christians in these places they had found opportunities of showing their Christian love. It was just such an outgoing as might commendably be connected with the short period of a few months. The word "do" is emphatic after "taught." The lesson is that Divine teaching is to be followed by suitable practice. Love must be allowed free outlet. "Love," says Barrow, "is a busy and active, a vigorous and sprightly, a courageous and industrious disposition of soul; which will prompt a man, and push him forward to undertake or undergo anything—to endure pains, to encounter dangers, to surmount difficulties for the good of its object. Such is true charity; it will dispose us to love, as St. John

prescribeth, in work and in truth; not only in mental desire, but in effectual performance; not only in verbal pretence, but in real effect." 3. *Its increase.* "But we exhort you, brethren, that ye abound more and more." What Paul had prayed for (ch. iii. 12) is now made subject of affectionate exhortation. The watchword formerly applied to the whole of a God-pleasing course is now specially applied to brotherly love. Let them abound more and more. Let them seek opportunities of manifesting their interest in Christ's people beyond Macedonia. And let them look to the purifying and intensifying of their love to the brethren. And, with a longer Christian history than they had, have we not need of the same watchword? If we have abounded, let us abound more and more. Let us embrace, in intelligent practical interest, a wider and wider extent of the Christian world. The great obstacle to love is selfishness, or exorbitant fondness for our own interests, for which we have all reason to humble ourselves before God. When shall we be taught to abandon this? When shall we be taught as in the great school of Christ, by the great lesson of the cross, to give love the unlimited sway of our being, so that we shall ungrudgingly delight in our Christian brethren, seek their advancement in Christian excellence, and help them in all ways that we can?

II. ACCOUNTING BY THEM THAT ARE WITHOUT THE CHRISTIAN CIRCLE. 1. *Quietness and doing our own business.* "And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business." "Be ambitious" is the marginal reading for "study," and the idea of *honour* which is in the Greek word is to be regarded as thrown into prominence by the association. "Be ambitious to be quiet." This is a paradox; for whereas restlessness belongs to ambition, we are to make it the object of our ambition to be quiet. "Political ambition," says Bengel, "blushes to be quiet;" and, it may be added, Christian ambition rejoices to be quiet. What is it that is here commanded to us? It is not a mere negation. To be quiet is not necessarily to be without strong force in our nature; but it is to have those forces so placed under Divine restraints, so moderated by reason, justice and charity, modesty and sobriety, as that we can do our own business, can confine ourselves to the sphere of our own proper duties. We may indeed interpose, when the honour and interest of God is much concerned, when the public weal and safety are much endangered. We may interpose for the succour of right against palpable wrong, for our own just and necessary defence. We may interpose when our neighbour is plainly going to ruin, "snatching him," as Jude says, "out of the fire." We may also interpose when we can do our neighbour considerable good. For all that is really doing our own business. But we are not to be impelled by ambition, or covetous desire, or self-conceit, or any other disturbing influence, beyond our own proper bounds. We are not to attempt, unasked, to manage for another, to overbear his will, to impose on him our opinions, to make free in conversation with his character, to pry into his affairs. We are not to thrust upon him our advice, to reprove him unbecomingly, or rashly, or unreasonably, or harshly. We are not to interpose in the contentions of others so as to make ourselves parties, or so as to raise or foment dissensions. For all that, against what is here commended, is turbulent meddling with what God has not made our business. "We may consider," says Barrow, "that every man hath business of his own sufficient to employ him; to exercise his mind, to exhaust his care and pains, to take up all his time and leisure. To study his own near concerns, to provide for the necessities and conveniences of his life, to look to the interests of his soul, to be diligent in his calling, to discharge carefully and faithfully all his duties relating to God and man, will abundantly employ a man; well it is if some of them do not encumber and distract him. Seeing, then, every man hath burden enough on his shoulders, imposed by God and nature, it is vain to take on him more load, by engaging himself in the affairs of others; he will thence be forced, either to shake off his own business, or to become overburdened and oppressed with more than he can bear. It is indeed hence observable, and it needs must happen, that those who meddle with the business of others are wont to neglect their own; they that are much abroad can seldom be at home; they that know others most are least acquainted with themselves. Philosophers therefore generally have advised men to shun needless occupations as the certain impediments of a good and happy life; they bid us endeavour to simplify ourselves, or to get into a condition requiring of us the least that can be to do." 2. *Working with our own hands.* "And to work with your hands, even as we charged you." This is to be regarded as a particular injunction under the foregoing. In the Second Epistle the language is, "that they

quietly work." The language here seems to point to this, that many of the members of the Thessalonian Church were handicraftsmen. From this injunction, and the way in which the second coming is introduced in the next paragraph, it would seem that the disturbing influence in the Church of Thessalonica was religious excitement, called forth by the new world of thought into which Christianity had brought them. They were especially excited by the prospects connected with the second coming. Paul, for one, saw the danger of their being carried away by the excitement—not so as to be meddlesome, but so as to be negligent of their earthly calling. Therefore he charged them well to work with their own hands, which also he enforced by his example. In this he showed his sense of the importance of quiet industry. However much we may be under the influence of the great truths and prospects of our religion, let us not be without the steady condition of our earthly calling. 3. *We are to be quietly industrious so as not to produce a bad impression on them that are without.* "That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and may have need of nothing." What there is of connection between the two parts of the paragraph seems to be this. We are to exhibit love within the Christian circle; we are also, within the Christian circle, to be quietly industrious, so as not to give occasion of offence to them that are without. We are to remember that the eye of the world is upon us, and that we are subjected to its judgment. And there are certain external features of the Christian circle upon which the world is quite fitted to pronounce judgment. Upon none is it more ready to fix than upon anything like the neglect of the ordinary duties of life. Therefore it is recommended that we quietly work with our own hands, with this specially in view, that we may walk becomingly (*i.e.* honestly) toward them that are without, and have all that is necessary for our wants. By industry and honesty we shall commend our religion to them that are without; for these are things which they can appreciate and by which they are likely to be attracted. Whereas, by idleness and indisposition to pay our debts, we shall bring a reproach upon our religion which does not belong to it, and reveal from us them that are without. In early times the heathen called healthy beggars traders on Christ, in allusion to what is here guarded against. Let us not by meddlesomeness, or by any want of industry, or honesty, or prudence, or straightforwardness, present Christ in an unlovely aspect to them that are without.—R. F.

Vers. 13—18.—*Anxiety about the state of the Christian dead.* I. STATE OF THE CHRISTIAN DEAD NO CAUSE FOR SORROW. "But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, which have no hope." Paul (the principal writer) sets himself here to administer consolation to the Thessalonians. In doing so he practises the duty he lays down in the concluding words of the paragraph. Himself in possession of comfort about the state of the Christian dead, he could not leave them in ignorance of it. As his Christian brethren, they must be sharers with him. Timothy had probably communicated to him the occasion of their anxiety. It was in the Thessalonian Church as in other Churches—there were those who, from time to time, were falling asleep. The change in the translation extends the scope of the language beyond the actually dead. How did it fare with their dead, and how also would it fare with those whom death would yet overtake? Christians are distinguished from the rest of mankind. It is said of the latter as a class, that they sorrow having no hope. What did the men of the old heathen world think with regard to their dead? Theocritus says, "The living have hopes, but the dead are without hope." Æschylus says, "Of the once dead there is no resurrection" Lucetius says, "Nor does any one stand forth awaked, whom once the cold pause of life has found." Catullus says, "Suns may set and return; when once our brief day has set we must sleep one everlasting night." It is a sad thought that some modern thinkers have given expression to the same blank hopelessness. Strauss has said, "A life beyond the grave is the last enemy which speculative criticism has to oppose and, if possible, to conquer." The whole hope of John Stuart Mill was an earthly future, not for the individual, but for the race, created by science "when all the greater evils of life shall have been removed." If such were our creed, or want of creed, we might well sorrow when our friends have been taken away. Our only feeding could be that we had seen the last of them. Their memory might remain (John Stuart Mill, writing after the death of his wife, said, "Her memory is to me a religion"); but that cannot

lift the gloom from the extinction of personal existence. Let no rude hand rob us of the comfort which our Christianity brings. It tells us here that we are not to sorrow for the state of our Christian dead. We may indeed sorrow for our being deprived of their earthly society. The Master himself gave relief to his nature in weeping, even in view of a speedy resurrection. Paul tells us that the removal of his friend Epaphroditus would have been to him sorrow upon sorrow. But, as for the state of our Christian dead, we are here told that they are *fallen asleep*. The description is in respect of the body, and contains three ideas. 1. *Continued existence*. A man continues to exist, though he is in a state of sleep. The body is still, but the mind may be active in dreams. And so, when the bodies of our Christian dead are in the stillness of the grave, there is no cessation of their existence. All doubt on this subject must be put to rest by the words of our Saviour on the cross to the dying penitent at his side, "To-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise." The souls of the departed are not in a state of sleep; but they are wakened up to a higher life. 2. *Repose*. In sleep we lose our hold upon the world; we forget its cares and pleasures; we are being calmed and soothed in our feelings. And so we are to think of our Christian dead as for ever released from the work and toil, the pain and sorrow, of this life, and as now calmed and soothed in the presence of God. "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, for their works follow with them." 3. *Wakening*. We think of sleep as followed by a waking. And so we are to think of a wakening for our Christian dead, though it may be after long years. They are awake now in respect of their souls; our fuller comfort is that they shall yet be awake in respect of those bodies which we have sorrowfully laid in the grave. "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction."

II. REASON FOR THE CHRISTIAN DEAD BEING ASSOCIATED WITH THEIR LORD AT HIS COMING. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him." The apostle goes back to the cardinal facts of Christ's death and resurrection. These are facts for which those who reject our continued existence after death have little respect; but they are dear to the Christian heart, and the more firmly our faith lays hold upon them, the more animated is our hope for our Christian dead. *We believe that Jesus died*; thus briefly does the apostle state the fundamental article of our Christian faith. "Such is the historical and supernatural basis of Christianity—its very definition, its breath of life, the source from whence springs all its greatness, strength, and uniqueness." The apostle states the fact plainly, "*Jesus died*," which is all the more observable that it is followed by a statement not plain but consolatory—our Christian dead are *fallen asleep*. We believe in a God who, in infinite love, became man, that he might verily (not in semblance) die, and who was not less truly God than man when he was nailed to the cross. We believe in a God-Man who came under the broken Law, and endured death as the curse due for sin. And our faith follows him beyond his death. *We believe that Jesus rose again*. That is the second great article of our Christian faith. Having in his death made full atonement for sin, he could not be holden of death. He rose victoriously out of the state of insensibility and lifelessness in which his body lay in the tomb. He rose with the same body, but changed to a nobler quality. We further believe that he died and rose again, not for himself, but for those whom he represented. He experienced death and conquest as Jesus—Saviour, Leader of his people. United to him, his people are not to be separated from him in destiny. He is here associated with their death. They are laid to sleep *by* Jesus, as the preposition should be. There is called up the image of Jesus himself caring for his own when the life departs—laying them to rest in the grave, and watching over them there with his omnipotent love. And, as he is associated with their death, so they are to be associated with his coming. Them that are laid to sleep by Jesus will God bring with Jesus. We are brought in view here of what distressed the Thessalonians. It was not a question *simply* of the resurrection; in that case the language would have been, "them will God raise up." But we are carried a point beyond that, to their being *brought as raised with Jesus*. We may, therefore, understand that what distressed the Thessalonians was the bearing of the coming of Christ on them who did not live to see that event. Would they not stand

at a great disadvantage? Would they have any share at all in his coming? Were they not to be sorrowed over as those who had missed the great object of their hope? For the relief of the Thessalonians Paul tells them this, to begin with, that the Christian dead are to be brought with Jesus. We are not to think of them as brought from heaven, for they are viewed in respect of their being in their graves. But we may think of them as joining their descending Lord, and brought with him to earth.

III. REVELATION MADE TO PAUL THAT THE CHRISTIAN LIVING ARE NOT TO HAVE THE PRECEDENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN DEAD AT CHRIST'S COMING. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep." It is true that in all he says in this Epistle he is under the direction of the Spirit of the Lord. In what he is now to say he proceeds on a word of the Lord such as there is in the Epistles to the seven Churches. He was privileged to announce directly from the heavenly Christ what had hitherto been concealed. The heavenly Christ was so interested in the Thessalonians that he had given his servant this revelation for them. The apostle divides Christians into two classes—"we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord," and "they that are fallen asleep." He includes himself in the former class, and from this it has been very confidently inferred that he had a *definite expectation* of living unto the coming of Christ. But he includes, not only himself and Silas and Timothy, but also the Thessalonians, about whom he has said that there were those among them who from time to time were falling asleep. Did he, then, having a definite expectation for *all*, believe in all being saved from death by an *immediate* coming of Christ? Is it not more reasonable to suppose that he thought of the living and left as in a continual flux? This is borne out by the use of the present instead of the future—"we who are for the present the living and left, who have no certainty that we will not remain unto the coming of Christ, but have also no certainty that another moment will not transfer us to the class of them that are fallen asleep." The revelation made to Paul related to a question of *priority of time*. It is strongly denied of the Christian living that they will come into the presence of the Lord at his coming before the Christian dead. This was further relief to the distressed Thessalonians. Their departed Christian friends would not only be brought with Jesus; it was also true that this bringing would not be deferred until after the Christian living had taken their places in nearer relation to their Lord.

IV. GREAT DRAMA OF THE FUTURE. Here we are supplied more particularly with the contents of "the word of the Lord." 1. *Prelude: The Lord descending in majesty.* "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." The central Figure is the *Lord himself*. He now sits enthroned in heaven, *Lord over all*. But he shall yet descend from heaven. There is thus confirmation of the announcement made by the heavenly visitants to the disciples gazing after their vanished Lord: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." We are left to think of the majesty of our descending Lord chiefly from the accompaniments of the descent. He shall descend with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump. The shout is such a shout of command as is given by a leader to his host. There are some who think of the shout of command as given by Christ. This is the view which is adopted by Milton in his conception of another scene.

"The Son gave signal high
To the bright minister that watched: he blew
His trumpet, heard in Oreb since perhaps
When God descended; and perhaps once more
To sound at general doom."

There is this consideration which tells against that interpretation, that God has been introduced as bringing them that are asleep with Jesus. We are thus led to think of God as the Actor behind the scene, which is confirmed by the expression following—"the trump of God." This makes it more natural to think of the accompaniments of the scene as arranged by God. Are we, then, to think of God as giving the shout of command? The objection to that view is, that the shout is represented not as preceding (as befitting God) but as accompanying the descent. It seems better,

then, to think of the shout as given by the archangel in the Name of God, and as comprehending the two things which follow. First, the moment that the Lord descends from his heavenly throne, the archangel, apprised of what is to happen, marshals his innumerable host. The shout of command he gives in this case with the living voice—the voice of the archangel. The angels are an orderly multitude. “He doeth according to his will in the *army* of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth” (with whom the idea of orderliness is not associated). We read of “twelve legions of angels.” The angels are led by an archangel. We read in Scripture of the angel Gabriel, and also of the seven angels that stand before God, but only in another place of an archangel who is there named Michael. Our Lord prepared us himself for this glorious accompaniment of his coming: “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him;” “When he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels;” “When he cometh in his own glory, and the glory of the Father, and of the holy angels.” An army associated with royalty gives an impression of power and grandeur. So how mighty and glorious a Personage must he be, in whose honour all the legions of angels are marshalled! They are *mighty* angels, and *holy* angels, and especially are they in sympathy with the work of honouring Christ. As they sang over his birth on earth, so do they accompany him in his triumphal descent to earth, having this to rejoice their hearts, that they also are to share in the glorious consummation. The archangel, having marshalled his host to move in harmony with the descending Lord, at a subsequent stage is to give another shout of command, this time not with the living voice, but with the trumpet put into his hand by God. Milton thinks of the trumpet that was used “when God descended” in Horeb, calling the congregation of Israel, as being the same trump of God. Very vividly in 1 Cor. xv. is it associated with the resurrection: “At the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound.” 2. *First act: Resurrection of the Christian dead.* “And the dead in Christ shall rise first.” “The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible.” The trumpet is simply the instrument; it is the power of God, communicated through the trumpet, that raises the dead. A trumpet supposes a faculty of hearing; but this trump of God has miraculously to supply the faculty of hearing. The remains of our Christian friends which we lay in the grave soon mingle with the dust. They hear not any sound of earth that passes over them. But there is a trumpet-call, with Divine, all-penetrating power in it, that one day they shall hear in their graves, and hearing they shall start up as once they were, and yet how changed! It was beside the purpose of the revelation to bring into view the resurrection of others than Christians, or the nature of the resurrection-body. The Thessalonians were so taken up with the coming, that the resurrection was thrown out of view. It did not enter, or did but little enter, into their understanding of the last things. Therefore their attention is concentrated upon the simple fruitful fact of the resurrection. It meant the presence of their departed Christian friends in the body on the earth ready to meet Christ. And that all fear of their being anticipated might be removed, it is stated not only that the dead in Christ shall rise, but that they shall rise *first*, i.e. to say, they shall rise before the assumption of the Christian living. The Christian dead now in the resurrection-body, and the Christian living, will be on the earth at the same time, equally ready for the approach of Christ. 3. *Second act: Assumption of the Christian living.* “Then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air.” The Christian living are to be swiftly, irresistibly caught up. This implies their transformation in their bodies. They are to be caught up at the same time with the Christian dead who have been raised. The two classes will form one great blessed company, between whom what distinguished them has passed away. How *they* will be marshalled does not appear. We do read of leading places being assigned to the twelve apostles. That they will be as orderly in their multitudinousness as the innumerable company of the angels, we do not doubt. Caught up in the enveloping appearing clouds in one body, they are to meet their descending Lord with the marshalled army of angels in the air. As persons of distinction go forth to meet their prince, so they now, all of them glorified persons, are caught up to meet their Lord in his triumphal descent. 4. *Finale: Perpetual enjoyment of the society of Christ.* “And so shall we ever be with the Lord.” There is a blank here, which it did not lie within the purpose of the revelation to have filled up. That the Lord actually descended to earth may be regarded as certain. The air was

his pathway to earth. When it is said that the fallen asleep God will bring with Jêsus, the meaning plainly is (taken in connection with the language which has just been used) that, joining our Lord in the air, they will be brought with him to earth. We may think of the earth as transformed, in preparation for the Lord's coming. Some would interpose here a lengthened personal reign of Christ on earth with his saints. We are only on sure ground when we think of Christ as coming for judgment. "But when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all the nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats." All that is here passed over, and we are presented simply with the final state of the two classes that have been united. "And so shall we ever be with the Lord." The meeting referred to shall be followed by no parting. It is Christ's wish and promise that we should be with him. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." Christ has prayed to the Father that we should be with him. "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am." And when we have been brought into his presence, in spite of death and all opposing powers, separation will be impossible. As members, we must be with our Head; as loving, we must be with the great Object of our love. To be with the Lord is to be in the most favoured position for the enjoyment of his love, for the comprehension of his mind, for the reception of his Spirit, for the accomplishment of his plans. To be with the Lord is also to be with that great and blessed company who shall be gathered round him, comprehending the elder sons of creation, the great and good of all ages, and those Christian friends we have "loved ere since and lost awhile." What is the position we shall be carried forward to through the course of eternal ages is more than tongue can tell, more than heart can conceive.

V. MUTUAL COMFORTING. "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." We might read "exhort one another." But in view of the sorrow of the Thessalonians we rightly read "comfort one another." We might even read "cheer one another;" for the words are not only of a comforting, but of an inspiriting nature. It is not Christian teachers, but Christians generally, who are addressed. Knowing what comfort is, let us not selfishly allow our Christian brethren to be ignorant of it. Even in our ordinary partings in the world there is an element of sadness that calls for comfort. As Shakespeare has it—

"So part we sadly in this troublous world
To meet with joy in sweet Jerusalem."

How thankful ought we to be that we are not in the position of those who have no hope, that we can tell those who have lost Christian friends of the sweet and cheering truth of Christ's coming! It is sad to think of them sleeping in the dust of the earth; but, laid to sleep by Christ, then they shall awake. They shall rest and stand in their lot at the end of the days. They shall hear the resurrection-call, and stand in the body as once they stood upon this earth. They shall be present as witnesses and actors at the most glorious event the universe shall ever have seen. They, and we too, shall be borne up in the clouds to meet and welcome our descending Lord. And from that first united meeting of him in our embodied, completed state, we shall be for ever with the Lord.—R. F.

Ver. 1.—*Christian progress.* This verse introduces a series of practical exhortations by an urgent entreaty to general Christian progress. The details of conduct must be considered. But the spirit and character of the whole life are of primary importance. First see to the health of the whole tree; then prune and train the several branches.

I. THE GREAT OBLIGATION OF CHRISTIAN PROGRESS. 1. *It requires a full, round development of spiritual graces.* It is not satisfied with a shrunken, shrivelled life of the soul. The meagre Christianity of those who are only concerned with the minimum requirements of religion is foreign to the very nature of a true spiritual life. This should abound; it should overflow; it should be developed in all directions. A one-sided life is maimed and marred, however advanced it may be in a particular direction. We should aim at completing the circle of graces. This is what is meant by being "perfect." 2. *It proceeds by gradual growth.* We are to abound "more and more." The attainment

which is respectable to-day will become despicable if it is not exceeded to-morrow. The growth is double—a greater achievement according to our present capacities and an enlargement of those capacities. The precious wine rises higher in the vessel; and the vessel itself expands.

II. THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF CHRISTIAN PROGRESS. 1. *It consists in conduct.* We are required to grow in knowledge. But this is not the most important form of spiritual progress. It has come about, unfortunately, that the phrase "advanced Christianity" stands for a certain doctrinal movement. It should be chiefly used for moral and spiritual progress. The great advance is to be in the walk and conversation of life—the daily, normal conduct. 2. *It is guided by knowledge.* St. Paul exhorts his readers to abound more and more in the conduct which follows his directions, "As ye have received of us." This progress is not to be according to our own fancied ideal of perfection. It is in pursuit of clear duty, and that duty is declared in Christian teaching. 3. *It is grounded on previous experience.* In the Revised Version we read the addition, "even as ye do walk." Future progress depends on our present position. We must not be always laying a new foundation. The Christian life is not a series of revolutions. Because more is required of the Christian, the good already attained is not ignored. 4. *It aims at pleasing God.* Thus it is characterized by a regard for the will of God. It is not satisfied with reaching any human standard. It is required to be pure, true, and spiritual.

III. THE STRONG INDUCEMENTS TOWARDS CHRISTIAN PROGRESS. 1. *They are urged with personal appeals.* St. Paul beseeches and exhorts. He appeals to the brotherhood of Christians and its tie of mutual affection between himself and his readers. 2. *They are centred in regard for Christ.* "By the Lord Jesus Christ." This is a sort of adjuration. The close relation of the Christian to Christ is his grand motive for striving after true progress. The grace of Christ supplies the power; the love of Christ brings the obligation. By all that he is to us we are urged to be worthy of him in an even richer and fuller Christian life.—W. F. A.

Ver. 9.—*Love of the brethren.* Christianity introduced a new word into the speech of mankind—"philadelphia," "love of the brethren." This word distinguishes a remarkable characteristic of the early Church. It describes how the first Christians regarded themselves as the members of one family. It was no visionary socialism, no communistic scheme, that led them to have all things common. They felt like the members of one household, like the nearest kindred in one home, and in the spirit of home life they shared their possessions. This was only possible so long as the family spirit pervaded the Church. Circumstances altered the habits of the Church as it grew in numbers and spread over a wider area. But all through the Epistles of St. Paul the same family affection of Christians is apparent. Love of the brethren is a leading feature of Christianity.

I. ITS SCOPE AND AREA. 1. *It is specially confined to fellow-Christians.* It is to be distinguished from philanthropy. We should love all men. Our neighbour, be he of the house of Israel, a Samaritan or a heathen, has claims upon us. But love of the brethren is to be distinguished from this general love of one's kind. It is the Christian's love of the Christian. 2. *It is due to all Christians.* It should not be given to a particular chosen circle of intimates only, nor simply to the members of one sect, nor to those only who excite our admiration. All Christians, of all ranks and orders, rich and poor, cultured and ignorant, saintly and imperfect, orthodox and heterodox, in every branch of the Catholic Church of Christ, have claims upon our love.

II. ITS ORIGIN. 1. *A common fatherhood.* We all have the same Father in heaven. In proportion as we realize the broad fatherhood of God shall we enter into the brotherly love of his family. He is the Father of whom "every family in earth and heaven is named." 2. *A common brotherly relation to Christ.* Every Christian can claim Christ as his Brother. The great elder Brother binds all the members of the family together by attracting them all to himself. We learn to love our fellow-Christian by seeing the Christ in him. 3. *Common interests.* We share the same blessings, enjoy the same redemption, walk in the same pilgrimage, and are travelling towards the same home.

III. ITS INFLUENCE. True love of the brethren cannot be without effect. Only the

lack of it could have permitted the fearful quarrels and enmities that have divided Christendom. Regard a man as your brother, and you will be loth to hound him to death. Were this love stronger many blessings would result. 1. *Mutual forbearance.* We permit our brother to hold his own opinion and follow his own conscience. 2. *Mutual helpfulness.* Selfish Christianity is a contradiction in terms. To bear one another's burdens is just to fulfil the law of Christ. 3. *Power to influence the world.* Civil war in the Church means paralysis of the army that should conquer the world for Christ. When Christians again learn the almost lost art of loving one another, they will attract converts from the world outside by better means than reasoning and preaching.—W. F. A.

Ver. 11.—*The industrial life.* Christianity has something to say on the industrial life. It has been charged with discrediting industry. No calumny could be more false. It certainly discourages engrossing worldly cares, and bids men remember their heavenly citizenship. But it only inculcates a more faithful discharge of earthly duty by insisting on lofty views of life and the pure principles which should inspire it. Three duties in regard to the industrial life are here urged by St. Paul.

I. AN AMBITION TO BE QUIET. The word "study" means literally, "be ambitious." This is a remarkable collocation of ideas—ambition and quiet. It is as though the apostle said, "You have been ambitious to make a noise in the world; reverse your aim: be ambitious of quiet." This striking piece of advice is urged in close connection with directions regarding the industrial life. Probably the Church at Thessalonica was largely composed of working-men. There was a danger lest the new privileges of Christianity should make some of these men foolishly anxious to make themselves conspicuous. 1. *We should aim at doing much good without attracting attention to ourselves.* The Christian should not clamour for recognition. He should be content that his work prospers, though he remains obscure. 2. *We should be too busy with work to have much time for talk.* Busybodies are generally drones. How silent is the work of God in nature! Silently the forest grows. So let our work be done. 3. *We should work peaceably.* The noisy man is too often the quarrelsome man. In the ambition to sound a name abroad, bitter envy and jealousy are excited. 4. *Ignorant people should not suppose that the privileges of Christian brotherhood qualify them to teach others.* "Be not many teachers" (Jas. iii. 1).

II. A DOING ONE'S OWN BUSINESS. 1. *The claims of the Church are no excuse for the neglect of a man's secular business.* It is wrong to become so much the slave of business as to have no time or energy for mission work, Sunday school teaching, etc. But it is also most certainly wrong to fail in our duty in the secular sphere. The Christian should be the most punctual, prompt, and energetic man of business. He should serve Christ in it. If he is responsible to others, his religion should strengthen his fidelity not to give eye-service as a man-pleaser. 2. *Religion does not remove a man from the station in which he is placed by Providence.* It may so improve his habits of work and may bring such blessings upon him as may enable him gradually to rise in the social scale. But it may permit no such external change; it should not be expected to do so in every case. And however that may be, religion can make no sudden change in a man's circumstances. The Christian slave was in outward circumstances a slave still. The artisan remained an artisan. 3. *Christianity forbids us to be envious of the more prosperous condition of other people.* It is not for us to snatch at their privileges to the neglect of our own duty. Every man has his Divine vocation. It is the Christian's duty to find his special vocation and to follow it, whether it lead him up the Beulah heights or down through the valley of humiliation. In the Church let each man find his own place and do his own work. There is a diversity of gifts. One has a gift of speech, another a gift of deft handiwork. Let neither be ambitious to usurp the place of the other. 4. *Christians should be too busy with their own work to have time to judge their neighbours.* We are workmen, not judges. To his own Master each man stands or falls.

III. AN HONEST DILIGENCE IN MANUAL LABOUR. This duty is clearly brought out in the Revised Version, which omits the word "own" before "hands," so that we read the clause, "Work with your hands." Thus we have a direct recommendation of manual labour. 1. *Manual labour is necessary.* There is hard, rough work of this

kind that must be done. It is cowardly to shirk it. Cultivated people do not object to hard work for amusement, *e.g.* rowing, Alpine climbing. Why should it be shunned when it is useful? 2. *Manual labour is honourable.* Any work done with a good purpose is honourable. The work of the carpenter is often more honourable than that of the financier. The dirtiest work is not always done by the roughest hands. The crowding of the sons of working men into the ranks of clerks is not a healthy sign if it betokens a shame of honest toil. 3. *Manual labour is wholesome.* The punishment of Adam is no curse. It is a blessing that man has to "eat his bread in the sweat of his face." While the early monks were busy, building, digging, weaving, monasticism presented a picture of pure Christian living. Riches brought superiority to physical industry, and corruption speedily followed. The best of Christ's apostles were working men.—W. F. A.

Ver. 12.—*Christians before the world.* In the previous verse St. Paul has been urging upon his readers the duty of quiet industry. He now gives two reasons for this advice—first, that they may walk honestly before the world; and secondly, that they may have need of nothing. The apostle turns to the same subject in his Second Epistle. "If any man will not work, neither let him eat," he says (2 Thess. iii. 10). God only provides for us when we cannot provide for ourselves; or, rather, he provides for us by helping us to provide for ourselves. He feeds the ravens by giving them strong wings and claws and beaks, and by providing them prey. But the birds must catch their quarry. We need not be anxious about the morrow if we are diligent in doing our own business. So much for the second reason for diligence. The first demands more extended inquiry, and may be taken by itself as a fertile subject for meditation. We are to be diligent in our secular business in order that we may "walk honestly towards them that are without."

I. CHRISTIANS OWE DUTIES TO THE WORLD. Christians have no right to treat "them that are without" as outlaws. If we should pray for those who spitefully use us, much more should we treat them honestly. And if we are to be kind to our enemies, certainly we are required to be just to those who are not inimical to us. The Christian must pay his debts to an infidel. The temperate man must fulfil his obligations to the drunkard. The spiritually minded man must be just to the worldly minded man. Christians should respect the rights of the heathen in foreign countries.

II. THE WORLD JUDGES CHRISTIANS ACCORDING TO THEIR DISCHARGE OF THESE DUTIES. These it can appreciate. It knows nothing of the behaviour of Christians in the Church. It cares nothing for orthodox creeds or devout psalm-singing. But it can estimate the value of a thorough piece of work, and it can see the merit of a prompt payment. If we are wanting in these things, the world will only regard us as hypocrites when we make much of our religion in spiritual matters—and rightly, for if we are not honest men we cannot be saints.

III. THE WORLD JUDGES CHRISTIANITY ACCORDING TO THE EXTERNAL CONDUCT OF CHRISTIANS IN THIS RESPECT. Here is a graver consideration. The honour of Christ is concerned. The defaulting Christian gives a shock to Christian evidences. One glaring instance of misconduct in secular affairs does more to hinder the progress of true religion than volumes of sermons can do to advance it. Even the negligent and idle Christian brings discredit on his Master. The Christian artisan should be known from the secularist by the greater diligence and thoroughness of his work.

IV. CHRISTIANS HAVE NO RIGHT TO EXPECT GOOD TREATMENT FROM THE WORLD UNLESS THEY BEHAVE HONESTLY TOWARDS IT. The Church at Thessalonica lived in constant danger of an assault from the hostile heathen population of the city. It was most desirable that no shadow of an excuse should be given for an attack. Idleness, noisy restlessness, interference with other people, would provoke opposition. Quiet industry was most safe. When a master found that the Christians were his best hands he would not be inclined to molest them. We shall best conciliate opponents and silence enmity and at last win respect by a quiet, unassuming, diligent discharge of our daily duty.—W. F. A.

Vers. 13, 14.—*Sorrow for the dead transfigured by the resurrection of Christ.* In the neighbourhood of Thessalonica—Salonica it is now called—there may be seen at the

present day ancient tombs on which are to be read inscriptions expressing hopeless regret for the dead. The Church addressed by St. Paul was a little community which had learnt to enjoy a strange, new view of the state and prospects of the departed, planted in the midst of a great pagan populace that held the melancholy sentiments of these epitaphs. Contrasting the Christians with "the rest" of the people, the apostle reminds them that they should not give way to the despairing sorrow that was natural to men who had no hope.

I. OUTSIDE CHRISTIANITY SORROW FOR THE DEAD IS HOPELESS. 1. *History and experience* establish this fact. Pagan tombs everywhere express themselves with various degrees of despair, but never with cheerful hope. Nations like the Egyptians that had a firm faith in a future life can scarcely be said to have enjoyed any hopes respecting that life. A general dream of immortality pervades our race; but it is everywhere dim and cheerless. Many men at all times have broken away from it altogether, and have said with Catullus, "When once our brief day has set we must sleep one everlasting night." 2. *Reasoning cannot conquer* the common hopelessness of sorrow for the dead. The arguments outside Christianity may be divided into two classes: (1) *Naturalistic*; e.g. from the nature of consciousness, from the indestructibility of all known existences, from the general instinct of immortality, from analogies of sleep, transformations of insects, succession of winter, spring, etc. Less and less weight is being ascribed to all such reasoning. It will not bear the strain of anxious doubt. The mourner turns his eyes in vain to nature for comfort. (2) *Theistic*. (a) In the *wisdom* of God. Man's life being but imperfectly developed here, the Divine idea of humanity would be vain and futile without a larger world for realizing it. (b) In the *justice* of God—the necessity of a future judgment. (c) In the *goodness* of God. A father would not mock his child by creating him so that he has a great hunger for a future which is unattainable. Nevertheless even these arguments do not satisfy, for who can venture to speak with assurance of the high counsels of the Almighty? and, moreover, they presuppose a knowledge of the character of God which only Christianity clearly furnishes.

II. CHRISTIANITY DRAWS THE STING OF HOPELESSNESS FROM SORROW FOR THE DEAD. 1. *It does not destroy that sorrow*. To do so would be impossible. We must grieve at parting from those who are dear to us. Indeed it would be unhealthy for us entirely to conquer natural sorrow. We should have to conquer natural love first. A softening, subduing, purifying mission comes with this grief, and is one of the best means of helping us to receive Christian truth. 2. *But Christianity removes the sting from this sorrow by depriving it of hopelessness*. The hope which St. Paul refers to is plainly the hope of receiving back those who have been taken from us by death. They are gone, but not gone for ever. Every weary year as it passes brings us nearer to the happy reunion. The words of St. Paul plainly show that he believed in the mutual recognition of friends in the future life.

III. THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST ARE THE SECRET OF THIS CHRISTIAN TRANSFIGURATION OF SORROW FOR THE DEAD. 1. *The strongest argument to convince men generally* of a future life is to be found in the resurrection of Christ taken in connection with his life and teaching. He spoke of judgment and of eternal life. He confirmed his words by rising from the dead. The confirmation is twofold. (1) The resurrection is a Divine authentication of the claims and mission of Christ. (2) It is an instance, a crucial test, a proof that a future life is possible. 2. *For Christians the death and resurrection of Christ are grounds for enjoying the hope of a reunion of all the dead who die in the Lord*. (1) The triumph of Christ is here shown. Now, the object of his death and resurrection was to redeem the world. But this redemption would be vain if there were no resurrection. "If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most pitiable." The resurrection of Christ proves that the object of his death was obtained. It must therefore be followed by the resurrection of his people in order that the redemption thus accomplished may be fully realized in them. (2) The union of Christians with Christ secures their resurrection. His experience becomes the experience of his people, because he lives in them and they live in him (1 Cor. xv. 22).—W. F. A.

Vers. 15, 16.—*The order of the second advent*. The subjects here brought before us

are entirely beyond the reach of speculation. We have no data whatever to go upon beyond the authoritative declarations of the Word of God. St. Paul himself was not prepared to reason about them. He could simply declare what was revealed to him. But this he did declare with marvellous, unhesitating positiveness. He prefaces his declaration by distinctly claiming the authority of inspiration for it. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord." So remarkable a revelation as that of the following verses needed some such assurance of its origin to commend it to us. We must take it in the spirit in which it is written, or we must leave it alone. It is useless to begin rationalizing with it. It is foolish to attempt to go one step beyond what is written. A sermon on such subjects must be as purely expository of the words of Scripture as possible. We note here three events in time, and their external consequence. The order of these three events is what St. Paul is most immediately concerned with. The occasion of his writing on them appears to have been the trouble felt by his readers as to the condition of those Christians who died before the second advent of Christ which they were expecting shortly to happen. Would these departed brethren miss the joy of welcoming their glorified Saviour? The order of events described by the apostle removes this difficulty.

I. THE FIRST EVENT IS THE ADVENT OF CHRIST. 1. *He is to come in Person.* He does not forget the world for which he died. He will return to his weary, waiting Church. 2. *He is to come in glory.* His first advent was humble and obscure. Few knew the Babe in the manger. Lowly and self-sacrificing was the whole life that followed. But every one that humbleth himself shall be exalted. The humble Jesus is to come again as the exalted Lord. 3. *He is to come conspicuously.* The shout, the full voice of an archangel, the blast of a trumpet—these awful sounds surely betoken no obscure mystical advent which can be questioned after it has occurred. When Christ comes a second time no one will say, "Is the Lord among us or no?" All will hear the great shout and the pealing angel-notes.

II. THE SECOND EVENT IS THE RETURN OF THE DEPARTED. Instead of missing the joy of that great advent, as their friends sadly feared, those Christians who had fallen asleep will be the first to share it. The trumpet will awake the dead before it arouses the living. There will be no advantage in being among the living at the time of the second coming of Christ. Some, even in our own day, have fondly hoped for some such privilege. But St. Paul distinctly tells us that the privilege is the other way. The departed will be the most privileged. This is fair; for if they have endured the pangs of death to reach Christ, it is right that they should see him first.

III. THE THIRD EVENT IS THE ASSOCIATION OF LIVING CHRISTIANS WITH THE SECOND ADVENT OF CHRIST. They take the second place in honour, not having wrestled with death and conquered the dread foe, as their departed brethren have done. But they also join in the glad triumph of their Lord. Of the physical process described as being "caught up into the clouds" we know nothing, and therefore cannot tell how it will be realized till it is accomplished. The attempt to explain it has only made the subject ridiculous. But the two spiritual facts accompanying it are clear. A joyous meeting with Christ and the departed, and a change of state and sphere; the earthly life and its limitations giving place to the heavenly life and its more exalted powers.

IV. THE ETERNAL CONSEQUENCE IS THE PERMANENT DWELLING OF CHRISTIANS WITH CHRIST. The second advent here described is not a passing event which ends. It is not a mere visit of Christ. It is not like the first advent, which, after a few years, was followed by the death and, after his resurrection, the ascension of Christ. Christ will never leave his people again. 1. *It secures joy.* The joy of love is to be with those we love. The highest Christian happiness is to be "for ever with the Lord." This is heaven. 2. *It protects from trouble.* God wipes away tears from all eyes. Associated with Christ for ever, his people can never weep again. 3. *It guards from sin.* Where the triumphant Christ always is, the defeated tempter can never come. 4. *It accomplishes the reunion of friends.* All being with Christ, all are also together. The home is perfected by the gathering of the blessed dead with the glorified living around the abiding Christ.—W. F. A.

EXPOSITION.

CHAPTER V.

CONTENTS.—With regard to the time of that glorious advent when believers, whether dead or living, will be gathered together to Christ, the Thessalonians had already been fully instructed. They knew well that the day of the Lord would come suddenly and unexpectedly, and surprise an ungodly world. But they were not in darkness so as to be taken by surprise. Still, however, they must exercise constant watchfulness and sobriety, and be armed with the Christian graces of faith, love, and hope, being comforted with the assurance that God had not appointed them to wrath, but to the acquisition of salvation through Jesus Christ, who died for their benefit, in order that, whether living or dead, they might share in the blessings of his advent.

Now follows a series of short admonitions. The Thessalonians were to love and honour their ministers, to live in peace among themselves, to admonish the disorderly, to encourage the faint-hearted, to support the weak, and to exercise forbearance toward all men. They were to be on their guard against revenge, to preserve Christian joyfulness, to be constant in prayer, and to maintain a thankful disposition. They were not to quench the Spirit, nor despise prophesyings, but were to test all things, retaining the good and rejecting the evil. And it was his earnest prayer for them that God would so completely sanctify them that they might be blameless at the advent of the Lord Jesus. After requesting an interest in their prayers, and solemnly charging them to read this Epistle to the assembled Church, the apostle concludes with his apostolic benediction.

Ver. 1.—This verse is connected with what precedes. The apostle was comforting the Thessalonians under the loss of their deceased friends by the assurance that both the living and the dead would be gathered together at the advent. The question would naturally arise, "When shall these things be?" (Luke xxi. 7); and it would appear that the Thessalonians expected an immediate advent. The apostle represses their curiosity on this point by reminding them of the uncertainty of the time of the

Lord's coming. But of the times and the seasons, brethren; that is, of the time and the precise period of the Lord's advent. "Times" and "seasons" are elsewhere united together (Eccles. iii.; Dan. ii. 21; Acts i. 7). The word translated "times" denotes time absolutely without regard to circumstances; and the word rendered "seasons" denotes a definite point of time; not merely the day, but the hour (Mark xiii. 32). *Ye have no need that I write unto you; literally, that ought be written unto you* (R.V.); comp. ch. iv. 9. The reason why it was not needful for the apostle to write unto them was, not because he regarded the information unprofitable or superfluous, or because he knew it to be impossible, but because he had already informed them when at Thessalonica that the time of the advent was beyond the sphere of his teaching. The apostle mentions this to repress that vain curiosity which is natural to man, and which was the occasion of so much disorder among the Thessalonians. Our duty is, not to pry into the times and seasons which the Father hath put in his own power (Acts i. 7), but to exercise constant watchfulness.

Ver. 2.—For yourselves know perfectly; namely, not from Scripture, nor from oral tradition, but from the teaching of the apostle when in Thessalonica. That the day of the Lord. "The day of the Lord" is a common Old Testament expression, denoting the coming of the Divine judgments (Joel i. 15; ii. 1); and by the phrase here is meant, not the destruction of Jerusalem, nor the day of one's death, but the day of the Lord's advent, when Christ shall descend from heaven in glory for the resurrection of the dead and the judgment of the world. The idea of judgment is contained in the term "day." So cometh as a thief in the night. The same comparison is used by our Lord himself (Matt. xxiv. 43; Luke xii. 39), and the very words are employed by Peter (2 Pet. iii. 10). The point of resemblance is evidently the unexpectedness and suddenness of the coming. The thief comes upon people in the night season, when they are asleep and unprepared; so, in a similar manner, when Christ comes, he will find the world unprepared and not expecting his advent. The ancient Fathers inferred from this passage that Christ would come to judgment in the night season, and hence they instituted vigils, or night watches. Some, still more precisely, fixed the coming on Easter night, from the analogy of the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt on the paschal evening.

Ver. 3.—For; the best manuscripts omit

this conjunction; the description is continuous. When they shall say; namely, the unbelieving world. Peace and safety; peace denoting internal rest, and safety external security. Sudden destruction cometh upon them. When they thought themselves most secure, they were then in the greatest danger; when they were most off their guard, then the crisis came. As travail upon a woman with child. The primary point of resemblance is certainly the suddenness and unexpectedness of the event; as labour comes upon a woman suddenly, so sudden destruction cometh upon the ungodly world. Still, however, the unavoidableness of the judgment may also be here intimated; there is no possibility of escape: this is implied in the last clause, and they shall not escape.

Ver. 4.—But ye, brethren; ye believers, in opposition to the unbelieving world. Are not in darkness; referring back to the night (ver. 2), when the thief comes. By darkness is here meant, not merely ignorance, but moral depravity—the darkness of sin. Ye are not in the ignorant and sinful condition of the unredeemed world, so as to be surprised by the day of the Lord. With you it is not night, but day; the light of the gospel is shining around you; and therefore the day of the Lord's coming will not surprise you in an unprepared state. That; a statement, not of result, but of purpose—"in order that." That day; *the day*; namely, the day of the Lord. Should overtake you—surprise you—as a thief.

Ver. 5.—Ye are all the children of the light, and the children of the day. Hebraistic expressions denoting, Ye all belong to the light and to the day. An affirmation, strengthening the previous declaration. The light and the day are synonymous expressions—the day being the period of light, as opposed to the night and darkness. We are not of the night, nor of darkness; rendering the positive assertion more emphatic.

Ver. 6.—Therefore; because we are the children of the light and of the day, because we have been enlightened and purified, we ought to be watchful and sober, so that we may not be unprepared for the day of the Lord. Privileges will avail us nothing, unless we use them and walk up to them. Let us not sleep. Sleep is here evidently used metaphorically to denote religious carelessness. As do others; the unbelieving and ungodly. But let us watch and be sober; evidently to be understood metaphorically of spiritual vigilance and sobriety: watchfulness denoting wakefulness from sleep, and sobriety freedom from intoxication. Both must be combined: we must be watchful, on our guard, and we must be sober, armed and prepared; "for

even by day," observes St. Chrysostom, "if one watches, but is not sober, he will fall into numberless dangers." The same exhortation is given by Peter, but in the reverse order: "Be sober, be vigilant" (1 Pet. v. 8).

Ver. 7.—For; the reason of this exhortation. They that sleep sleep in the night; and they that are drunken are drunken in the night. Here not to be taken in a metaphorical sense, but a simple statement of fact—what occurs in ordinary experience. The night is the season in which sleep and drunkenness usually occur; whereas the day is the season of watchfulness, sobriety, and work. Both heathen and Jews considered it as eminently disgraceful for a man to be seen drunken in the day-time. Hence, when the Jews accused the believers on the day of Pentecost with being filled with new wine, Peter answered, "We are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day" (Acts ii. 15).

Ver. 8.—But; contrast to the conduct of those who are of the night; let us not only be watchful, but armed. The apostle now adopts a favourite figure, that of spiritual armour. The arms which he here mentions are only two—the breastplate to protect the heart, and the helmet to guard the head; they are both defensive weapons, because the reference here is not so much to the believer's conflict with evil, as to his defence against surprise. And by these spiritual weapons are denoted the three cardinal graces—faith, love, and hope (ch. i. 3). Let us who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love. By "faith" is here meant faith in Christ; and by "love," not so much love to God as love to man. These preserve the heart of a Christian against the assaults and influences of evil, as the breastplate guards the heart of the earthly warrior. And for a helmet, the hope of salvation. Salvation in its most comprehensive sense. The hope of salvation sustains our courage amid all the trials of life by holding out to us the prospect of eternal blessedness. Vigilance is of no avail unless armed by faith, hope, and love. In the Epistle to the Ephesians there is a still fuller enumeration of the Christian armour (Eph. vi. 14—18); and there is a slight difference in the description of the weapons. Here the apostle speaks of the breastplate of faith and love; there of the breastplate of righteousness and of the shield of faith. Here the helmet is called the hope of salvation; there the apostle speaks of the helmet of salvation. And besides these defensive weapons, other weapons of defence and the sword, a weapon of offence, are mentioned.

Ver. 9.—For. Not a new reason for watchfulness and sobriety, but referring to "the

hope of salvation," why we may with confidence put on such a hope as a helmet. God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain—or, *to the acquisition of*—salvation by—or, *through*—our Lord Jesus Christ. Not through the doctrine of Christ, nor even through faith in Christ, but through the Lord Jesus Christ himself, through what he has done for us, and especially through his atoning death. The appointment of God's grace is here mentioned as the efficient cause of our salvation; and the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Mediator through whom salvation is bestowed.

Ver. 10.—**Who died.** His death being the meritorious cause of our salvation. For us; that is here, not "instead of us," but "for our benefit," or "on our account." That, whether we wake or sleep. Here not to be taken in an ethical sense—whether we are spiritually awake or asleep, for those who are spiritually asleep will be surprised by the coming of the Lord; nor in a natural sense—whether he come in the night and find us taking our natural sleep, or in the day, when we are awake—which would be a mere trifling observation; but in a metaphorical sense—whether we are alive or dead. The apostle has just been speaking of those who are dead under the designation of those "who are asleep" (ch. iv. 13), and therefore it is natural to interpret the clause, "whether we wake or sleep," of the condition of believers at the coming of the Lord. There is here certainly a change of metaphor: "sleep" in ver. 6 denotes religious carelessness; in ver. 7, natural sleep; and here, death. **We shall live together**—or, *in one company*—with him. The apostle is still continuing his consolatory address to those who were mourning over their deceased friends; and he tells them that at the advent there will be no difference between those who are then alive and those who sleep—both will live together with the Lord (comp. Rom. xiv. 8, 9).

Ver. 11.—**Wherefore**; because, whether alive or dead, you will equally share in the blessings of the advent. **Comfort yourselves together.** The words refer back to the last verse of the preceding chapter (ch. iv. 18), and with them the apostle concludes his consolatory address to those who were mourning over the loss of their friends. **And edify one another**; or, *build up*. It was a favourite figure of the apostle to compare the Christian Church and each individual believer to a building.

Ver. 12.—With this verse commences a new paragraph. The apostle adds in conclusion a few brief and somewhat miscellaneous exhortations. **And we beseech you, brethren**; an expression of earnestness and affection. To know; that is, to value, appre-

ciate, and esteem. **Them which labour among you.** It was Paul's custom to organize the Churches which he had founded, and to appoint presbyters among them. Although the Church of Thessalonica had been so recently founded, yet it had its presbyters. **And are over you.** The presbyters, in virtue of their office, presided over the Christian assemblies. **In the Lord**; the sphere in which they were set over the Church; they were ordained to minister in sacred things. **And admonish you.** There are not three classes or orders of office-bearers here mentioned—those who laboured among them, those who presided over them, and those who admonished them (Macknight); but all these duties belonged to one class, namely, the presbyters.

Ver. 13.—**And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake**; that is, both on account of their labours, and especially on account of the dignity of their office, for their work is the work of the Lord. Both love for their persons and respect for their authority are here enjoined. **And**; to be omitted, as not in the original. **Be at peace among yourselves.** A new exhortation, entirely independent of the preceding; it is not addressed to the presbyters, but to the members of the Church in general.

Ver. 14.—**Now we exhort you, brethren**; an exhortation also addressed to all. **Warn them that are unruly**; or, as in the margin, *disorderly* (R.V.). Different modes of treatment have to be adapted to different classes; the unruly have to be warned. The word here rendered "unruly" or "disorderly" was originally a military term expressing the character of those soldiers who would not keep their ranks—out of the ranks. It would seem from this and other intimations that disorders existed among the Thessalonians; and that, especially being impressed by a belief in the near approach of the advent, several of them neglected the common duties of life, and abstained from working. **Comfort the feeble-minded.** By "the feeble-minded" are meant the desponding or faint-hearted; those who were agitated about the fate of their deceased friends, or those who despaired of the grace of God by reason of their sins. These were not to be reprimanded, but comforted and exhorted. **Support the weak.** By "the weak" are not meant those who are physically weak—the sick; but those who are spiritually weak, whose faith was feeble—those who were afraid of persecution, or were troubled with vain scruples. These were to be supported—confirmed in the faith. **Be patient toward all men**; all men in general, whether believers or unbelievers; toward them patience and forbearance were to be exercised.

Ver. 15.—See that none render evil for evil unto any. The prohibition of revenge is peculiarly Christian, neither corresponding to the spirit of heathenism, nor yet clearly revealed in Judaism. A precisely similar prohibition is given in Rom. xii. 17, "Re-compense to no man evil for evil." But ever follow; pursue after. That which is good; the good, the beneficial. Both among yourselves; your fellow-Christians. And to all men. The human race in general; the one being brotherly kindness and the other charity (2 Pet. i. 7).

Ver. 16.—Rejoice evermore; or, *rejoice always* (R.V.). Joy is that feeling of delight which arises from the possession of present good, or from the anticipation of future happiness; and in both respects the believer has abundant reason for constant joy. He possesses the blessedness of forgiveness and the sure prospect of eternal life, and he has the consciousness that all things work together for good to them that love God (Rom. viii. 28). God wishes his people to be happy, and does not suffer them to be indifferent to their own peace. He commands them to rejoice, yea, to rejoice evermore. "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice" (Phil. iv. 4).

Ver. 17.—Pray without ceasing. The means of promoting religious joy is prayer. This prayer is to be "without ceasing;" implying constancy (Col. iv. 2) and perseverance (Rom. xii. 12; Eph. vi. 18; Luke xviii. 1). This is not a mere precept "capable of fulfilment in idea, rather than in fact" (Jowett); but it is an exhortation to live in a devotional frame of mind. It is possible to be always on our bended knees, but we may be in the spirit of prayer when engaged in the duties of our earthly calling. Prayer may be without ceasing in the heart which is full of the presence of God, and evermore communing with him.

Ver. 18.—In everything give thanks. In every circumstance—in joy and in sorrow; for everything—for prosperity and for adversity; in every place—in the house of God and on the bed of sickness; Christians should not only be engaged in constant prayer, but in constant thanksgiving; indeed, their prayers should partake largely of the nature of thanksgiving. For this; this thankful spirit. Is the will of God; his desire. In Christ Jesus; the sphere in which this will of God is displayed. Concerning you. God by the gift of his Son has laid us under the obligation of perpetual thanksgiving. Our whole lives ought to be one continued thank-offering for all the blessings of redemption.

Ver. 19.—Quench not the Spirit. The Spirit is here considered as a flame which may be extinguished (Matt. iii. 11). The descent of the Spirit at Pentecost was in

the form of cloven tongues like as of fire (Acts ii. 3). By the Spirit here is usually understood the miraculous gifts of the Spirit—speaking with tongues or prophesying; and it is supposed that the apostle here forbids the exercise of these gifts being hindered or checked. In the next verse the gift of prophesying is mentioned. But there is no reason to exclude the ordinary and still more valuable gifts of the Spirit, such as pure thoughts, holy actions, devout affections, which may be effectually quenched by a careless or immoral life. "Quench not the Spirit." Do not those things which are opposed to his influences. Be on your guard against sin, as opposed to the work of the Spirit in the soul. In this sense the admonition is similar to that given by Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians: "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God" (Eph. iv. 30).

Ver. 20.—Despise not prophesying. This refers to the miraculous gift of prophecy possessed by the primitive Church. And by prophesying here we are to understand, not the prediction of the future, but inspired discourse, conducive to the instruction and edification of the Church. "By the term 'prophesying,'" observes Calvin, "I do not understand the gift of foretelling the future, but the science of interpreting Scripture, so that a prophet is an interpreter of the will of God." This useful gift, it would seem, was apt to be despised, and the inferior miraculous gift of tongues to be preferred before it (1 Cor. xiv. 1—3).

Ver. 21.—Prove all things. This exhortation is closely connected with the preceding. "Prove all things," namely, whatever was advanced by the prophets in their inspired discourses (comp. 1 John iv. 1, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God"). "Prove" here means to test, as metals are tested in the fire; and hence the word frequently denotes the favourable result of the testing, or approval. There was a special gift of discerning spirits in the primitive Church (1 Cor. xii. 10; xiv. 29). But although the words primarily refer to the testing of prophetic utterances, yet they have a general application. We should not rest our faith on the authority of others. The right of private judgment is the characteristic and privilege of Protestantism. We ought thoroughly to examine all doctrines by the test of Scripture, and then, discerning their reasons, we shall be able to take a firmer hold of them. At the same time, the fundamental principle of rationalism, that reason as such is the judge of the doctrines of revelation, is not contained in these words, and cannot be inferred from them. Hold fast; retain. That which is good; the good, the beautiful, the honour-

able; a different word from that rendered "good" in ver. 15. We are to retain whatever is good in those "all things" which we are to prove or test, namely, in the prophesyings.

Ver. 22.—**Abstain from all appearance of evil.** This verse is connected with the last, and states negatively what is there stated positively. Test the declarations of the prophets; retain the good, and reject the evil. The word translated "appearance" has been differently rendered; it denotes form, figure, species, kind: so that the clause is to be rendered, "Abstain from all form of evil" (R.V.), or, "of the evil," the word being an abstract substantive. The whole exhortation is similar to that given in Rom. xii. 9, only there the negative statement is put first: "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." Some suppose that the metaphor employed is from the practice of money-changers who tested the money offered to them, rejecting what was base and retaining what was genuine. Among the Fathers we meet with the phrase, "Be ye experienced money-changers," as a traditional saying of our Lord; and some suppose that the apostle refers to this saying, and give the following paraphrase: "The good money keep; with every sort of bad money have nothing to do; act as experienced money-changers: all the money presented to you as good, test." Such a supposition is fanciful and far-fetched.

Ver. 23.—**And the very God of peace;** the God who communicates peace; an expression frequently employed by Paul at the close of his Epistles (Rom. xv. 33; xvi. 20; Phil. iv. 9; 2 Cor. xiii. 11; 2 Thess. iii. 16). **Sanctify you wholly;** that is, perfectly, without anything wanting, referring to the entireness of the sanctification, which is presently expressed in detail. **And I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body;** the adjective "whole" applies to all the three substantives. The apostle here divides human nature into three parts—spirit, soul, and body; and this threefold division is not a mere rhetorical statement: "The apostle pouring forth from the fulness of his heart a prayer for his converts" (Jowett); but a distinct statement of the three component parts of human nature. The "spirit" is the highest part of man, that which assimilates him to God; renders him capable of religion, and susceptible of being acted upon by the Spirit of God. The "soul" is the inferior part of his mental nature, the seat of the passions and desires, of the natural propensities. The "body" is the corporeal frame. Such a threefold distinction of human nature was not unknown among the Stoics and Platonists.

There are also traces of it in the Old Testament, the spirit, or breath of God, being distinguished from the soul. Be preserved blameless. "The spirit is preserved blameless at the advent when the voice of truth rules it, the soul when it strives against all the charms of the senses, and the body when it is not abused as the instrument of shameful actions" (Lünemann). **Unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Ver. 24.—**Faithful is he that calleth you.** Paul knows that he does not beseech God in vain. He who calls you to the Christian faith is faithful to fulfil his promises. God's calling is the commencement of a series which terminates in glorification (Rom. viii. 30). A similar appeal to the faithfulness of God is elsewhere made by the apostle (1 Cor. i. 9; 2 Thess. iii. 3). **Who also will do it;** namely, will preserve you blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ver. 25.—**Brethren, pray for us;** namely, that our apostolic work may be successful; that "the Word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified" (2 Thess. iii. 1). The apostle, in almost all his Epistles, requests from his converts an interest in their prayers (Rom. xv. 30; 2 Cor. i. 11; Eph. vi. 19; Col. iv. 3; 2 Thess. iii. 1; comp. Heb. xiii. 18). Ministers and people need each other's prayers, and prayer is a duty which they owe to each other.

Ver. 26.—**Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss.** That certain persons were enjoined to salute the other members of the Church is a proof that the Epistle was given into the hands of the presbyters. The reference is to the mode of salutation in the East. The kiss is called "holy" because it was the symbol of Christian affection. The same exhortation is made in other Epistles (Rom. xvi. 16; 1 Cor. xvi. 20; 2 Cor. xiii. 12).

Ver. 27.—**I charge you;** namely, the presbyters. **By the Lord;** namely, Christ, an indirect proof of his Divinity, the adjuration being in his Name. The reason of this solemn charge was, not on account of any remissness on the part of the presbyters, but was occasioned by the earnestness of the apostle and by his consciousness that what he wrote was most important to the Thessalonians, and was the command of the Lord Jesus Christ. **That this Epistle be read unto all the holy brethren;** unto the Church of Thessalonica.

Ver. 28.—**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.** A similar salutation is to be found at the close of all Paul's Epistles; indeed, in the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, he states that this salutation was the token which he affixed to his Epistles (2 Thess. iii. 17, 18). **Amen.** To be rejected, as not in the original.

HOMILETICS.

Ver. 6.—*Watchfulness and sobriety.* The day of the Lord is uncertain as regards its time. The early Christians were mistaken in regarding that time as at hand, and we perhaps may be equally mistaken in regarding it as distant. But there is an event which to each of us is, to all intents and purposes, the same as “the day of the Lord,” which is both near and uncertain—the day of our death. Let us be watchful, so that that day may not overtake us in an unprepared state; and let us be sober, never indulging ourselves in any course of action in which we would not wish death to surprise us.

Ver. 8.—*Spiritual armour.* We must not only be watchful, but be armed sentinels. To guard against surprise we must especially provide ourselves with two defensive weapons. 1. *The breastplate of faith and love.* By faith in Christ and love to man we shall effectually preserve our hearts against evil influences. Faith imparts courage, and love preserves us from selfishness, the great inlet to evil. The stronger and the more living our faith, and the purer and the more active our love, the more completely shall we be guarded against evil. 2. *The helmet of the hope of salvation.* By “the hope of salvation” we shall preserve our head from being filled with the idle dreams of worldly happiness, whether of power or fame. Hope will defend us from being seduced by the world’s pleasures or allured by the world’s honours.

Ver. 15.—*Christian forgiveness.* 1. *Its peculiarity.* Forgiveness of our enemies is pre-eminently a Christian virtue. It had no place in the morality of the heathen. The utmost they could attain to was, “Thou shalt love all men except those who have wronged thee.” It was very obscurely revealed in the Old Testament. The ancient saints did not distinguish between sinners and their sins; hence David’s bitter curses against his and the Lord’s enemies. Jesus Christ was the first to lay special stress on forgiveness. 2. *Its properties.* Forgiveness must be free, full, and universal; no feelings of enmity or ill will to any of our fellow-men ought to lodge in our hearts. We must imitate the example of our Saviour, who on the cross prayed for the forgiveness of his murderers.

Ver. 16.—*Religious joy.* 1. *Its sources.* Religious joy springs from four sources: from the relation in which believers stand to God, and then it is the joy of love; from the interest which they have in Christ, and then it is the joy of faith; from the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, and then it is the joy of holiness; and from the hopes which they have of heaven, and then it is the joy of hope. 2. *Its properties.* Religious joy is ordinarily calm; it is serious; it may be often interrupted; it is purifying; it is generally greater at peculiar seasons; and it is often sensibly felt at the hour of death. 3. *Means of obtaining it.* We must live by faith in Christ, guard against seeking our chief happiness in any creature-good, and be diligent in the performance of our religious duties.

Ver. 17.—*Unceasing prayer.* We ought not only to have stated hours of prayer, but to be continually raising up ejaculatory prayers, carrying on a constant intercourse between God and our souls; our prayers should be like the angels which Jacob saw continually ascending the mystic ladder to the throne of God. Unceasing prayer implies: 1. *A devotional spirit:* walking with God. 2. *Ejaculatory prayer:* our thoughts rising in prayer amid our daily occupations. 3. *Perseverance in prayer:* not leaving off until our prayers are answered. 4. *Regularity in prayer:* carefully keeping the appointed seasons for prayer. 5. *Conjunction of thanksgiving with our prayers:* realizing God’s mercies and grace.

Ver. 19.—*Quenching the Spirit.* 1. *How we may quench the Spirit.* We quench the Spirit by the commission of grievous sins, by the indulgence of sensuality, covetousness, pride, and the irascible passions, and by formality and lukewarmness in our religion. 2. *How we may cherish the Spirit.* We cherish the Spirit by earnest desires

for his influences, by a diligent use of the means of grace, by a spirit of trust and dependence, and by compliance with his secret impressions.

Vers. 21, 22.—Use of reason in religion. 1. *The office of reason in religion.* Reason is of use to examine the evidences of revelation, to ascertain the contents of revelation, and to judge that there is no contradiction to reason and morality in those doctrines which we suppose are deducible from Scripture. 2. *The limitation of reason in religion.* Distinction between what is above reason and what is contrary to reason. When once we prove that Scripture is the Word of God, and that such and such doctrines are contained in it, then it is the province of reason to submit to faith, because the truth of these doctrines rests on their being part of a Divine revelation; the doctrines of revelation are above, but they can never be proved to be contrary to, reason.

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Vers. 1—5.—Certainty of the time of the second advent. There is a natural curiosity to know “the times and the seasons” connected with an event so transcendently important to the human race. “But of the times and the seasons ye have no need that I write unto you.”

I. GOD HAS TIMES AND SEASONS IN HIS OWN POWER. It is solemnly true that “to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the sun” (Eccles. iii. 1). God has “determined the times before appointed” (Acts xvii. 26). His Son came “in the fulness of time” (Gal. iv. 4). There is often a curious periodicity in the great time-intervals marked in sacred history.

II. GOD HAS HID FROM MAN THE PRECISE DATE OF THE SECOND COMING. “Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father” (Mark xiii. 32); “It is not for you to know the times and the seasons the Father hath put in his own power” (Acts i. 7).

III. THE DAY OF THE LORD WILL BE PERFECTLY UNEXPECTED. “The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.” 1. *It is the day of the Lord, as it is “the day of the Son of man.”* “The day of God;” “the day of redemption,” involving that of the body as well as the soul; “the last day,” the day which winds up the destinies of the universe. 2. *It will be sudden and unexpected.* It will be “as a thief in the night,” who comes without previous warning at such an hour as we are not looking for him. This is true, even though there may be signs in the sun and moon and stars, and distress of nations, and men’s hearts failing them for fear (Luke xxi.). These will be the first signs to break up the calm, but the wicked will not see them in their true light. There is nothing in the simile of the thief to justify the opinion that Jesus will come in the night.

IV. THE SECURITY OF THE WICKED. “For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.” 1. *Their condition is one of “peace,” inner quiet, and “safety,” external tranquillity.* 2. *Their fate.* “They shall not escape.” It will be with them as with the men in the days of Noah and Lot (Matt. xxiv. 38—39). The catastrophe will be as inevitable and as full of fear as in the case of a “woman in travail.”

V. THE PREPAREDNESS OF THE RIGHTEOUS. This lies in their character. “But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.” 1. *They were “not in darkness.”* They were “sons of light, sons of the day.” Darkness is the characteristic of the wicked. (1) There is darkness in their understanding. (2) There is darkness in their hearts. “Their foolish hearts are darkened.” (3) They walk in darkness, and therefore stumble and go astray. (4) They live in darkness (Ps. cvii. 10), they belong to “the kingdom of darkness” (Col. i. 13); they are under “the world-rulers of this darkness” (Eph. vi. 12). (5) But the darkness does not hide them from God’s vengeance. 2. *Believers are “sons of light.”* “Sons of the day.” (1) They walk in the light (1 John i. 7); for “he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John viii. 12). (2) They are in fellowship with God, for they cannot have it and walk in darkness (1 John i. 6. 7). (3) They “have cast off the works of darkness, and put on the

armour of light" (Rom. xiii. 12). (4) They are in fellowship with all believers; for "he that walketh in darkness hateth his brother" (1 John ii. 9).—T. C.

Vers. 5—8.—*A warning against watchlessness.* The apostle says that, as children of light and of the day, believers ought to exercise vigilance and sobriety in view of the solemn prospects before them.

I. THE SIN AND DANGER OF SPIRITUAL SLEEP. "Let us not sleep, as do others." There are three kinds of sleep spoken of in Scripture—the sleep of nature, which restores the wasted energies of the body; the sleep of death; and the sleep of the text, which is always fraught with peril, its prevailing idea being insensibility. The sleeper is: 1. *Not aware of his danger.* 2. *Forgetful of his duty.* 3. *Unconscious of the real world around him.* 4. *Immovable to all appeals.* 5. *May not even know that he is asleep.*

II. THE DUTY OF WATCHFULNESS AND SOBRIETY. "But let us watch and be sober," so as to be always prepared for the Lord's coming. We are not to be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, so that that day should overtake us unawares. Let us watch that we may be sober. 1. *The reason is that sleep and drunkenness are works of darkness done in the night.* "They that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night." Those spiritually asleep "sleep through all life's agitations, beneath the thunders of Sinai, and the pleadings of mercy from the cross." Like drunken men, they are intoxicated with life's delights, "minding earthly things," occupied supremely with "the unfruitful works of darkness." Believers are not so, into whose heart "God has commanded the light to shine out of darkness, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus" (2 Cor. iv. 6). 2. *Another reason for watchful sobriety is that our life is a spiritual warfare.* The believer is to be a sentinel always on guard, or a soldier on the battle-field—"having on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation." As a good soldier, bound to endure hardness, he goes forth into the conflict of life, equipped in Divine armour, not for aggression but for defence. The pieces of armour here enumerated are for the protection of vital parts, the heart and the head. (1) Faith is the principal part of this spiritual armour. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John v. 4, 5). It is by faith they resist the devil (1 Pet. v. 9). It is by it all difficulties are overcome (Matt. xvii. 20). If it is by the "sword of the Spirit, the Word of God," we are to conquer, faith is the arm that wields the sword. The eleventh chapter of Hebrews illustrates the power of faith as a principle of action and as a principle of endurance. (2) Love is joined with faith to form the breastplate, for "faith worketh by love" (Gal. v. 6). Love preserves from apostasy, and knits the saints together, because it is the bond of perfection, and thus enables us to bear all trial through love to the Redeemer. (3) The hope of salvation is the helmet. In the corresponding passage in Ephesians, the helmet is salvation itself; but the difference is not material, the salvation in the one case being partially enjoyed, in the other an object of future hope. Hope is a protection to the believer, as it nerves him to meet danger, and enables him to brave difficulties, by looking to the glorious objects in view. Therefore it is "the patience of hope." Thus the three Christian graces make the soul watchful and ready for the Lord's coming.—T. C.

Vers. 9—11.—*The source, channel, and end of the salvation hoped for.* The apostle is now led to illustrate the hope of salvation.

I. ITS SOURCE. "For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to the obtaining of salvation." 1. *The calling is according to the purpose.* "Whom he predestinates, them he also calls." The security of the believer depends, not upon himself, but upon God's unchangeable and loving purpose. 2. *The purpose is not to wrath, but to salvation.* Though believers were once "children of wrath," they are now reconciled to God, and saved from wrath to come. 3. *God's purpose of mercy toward us does not free us from the necessity of being watchful concerning the means of salvation.*

II. THE CHANNEL OF SALVATION. "By our Lord Jesus Christ." 1. *The covenant was "ordained in the hand of a mediator."* (Gal. iii. 19.) 2. *His death, not his doctrine or example merely, was necessary to our salvation.* "Who died for us." 3. *His death was substitutionary.* It was "for us."

III. THE END OF THIS SALVATION. "Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live with him together." This was "the joy set before him" for which "he endured the cross" (Heb. xii. 2) that we might live to him in order to our living with him. 1. *It is life with Christ.* Not merely life in him, but life with him in glory. "I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better" (Phil. i. 23). It is the greatest joy and glory of heaven (Rom. xiv. 8, 9; 1 Cor. v. 9). 2. *It is life with all believers.* They are to live with him, unsevered from one another; for whether they "are alive and remain," or whether they are of those who "have fallen asleep," they will be together, in Christ's society. Thus the great salvation is the "common salvation."

IV. THE CONSOLATORY ASPECT OF THESE TRUTHS. "Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do." These truths afforded a grand basis for mutual comfort and edification. The Thessalonians ought, therefore, to dismiss their despondency and alarm, and encourage each other with the blessed hopes of the gospel.—T. C.

Vers. 12, 13.—*The due recognition of Christian pastors.* The apostle next touches upon the relation of the Church to its teachers.

I. THE APPOINTMENT OF PASTORS IN THE CHURCH. 1. *This was by Divine appointment.* "He gave pastors and teachers" (Eph. iv. 11). There is no hint given in Scripture of a time when pastors would cease to be necessary, and when the Church would be served by an "any-man ministry." 2. *It was the custom of the apostles to "appoint elders in every city,"* for they understood the advantages of a full ecclesiastical organization.

II. THE OFFICIAL POSITION AND DUTIES OF PASTORS. 1. *They are labourers in the Church.* "We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you." (1) This work is no sinecure, but a hard exhausting service, with heavy responsibilities and many cares. (a) It is labour in preaching. For they "labour in the Word and doctrine" (1 Tim. i. 5), "rightly dividing the Word of truth" (2 Tim. ii. 15), giving each of the household of faith "a portion of meat in due season" (Luke xii. 42). (b) It is labour in earnestly contending for the faith as well as in dispensing the ordinances of religion. (2) It is labour in a Divine partnership. For pastors are "labourers together with" God in the work of perfecting the Church (1 Cor. iii. 9). 2. *They are presidents in the Churches.* "Those which are over you in the Lord." This refers to the elders or presbyters, who are also called pastors, or shepherds, or bishops (Acts xx. 17, 28). (1) The appointment of rulers is essential to order and harmony in the Church. (2) Yet they are not a sacerdotal caste, nor "lords over God's heritage" (1 Pet. v. 3). (3) Their official superiority is "in the Lord," because from him deriving its warrant, motive, and blessing. 3. *They are spiritual guides.* "And admonish you." They have "to watch for your souls as they that must give account" (Heb. xiii. 17). Therefore they must "reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. iv. 2). They have to "warn every man, and teach every man in all wisdom, that they may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col. i. 28). They have to warn against sins committed, and urge to duties neglected.

III. THE OBLIGATIONS OF CHRISTIAN PEOPLE TO THEIR PASTORS. 1. *They must give them due recognition as pastors.* They must "know them." They must make themselves acquainted with them, that pastors may be the better able to know the state of their souls, and they must acknowledge their position as "stewards of the mysteries of God," and submit to their ministry. 2. *They must "esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake."* (1) The bond is not to be one of mere official relationship, but of affection. (2) A due respect for the ministry is an important element in its efficiency and success. Therefore we are to "hold such in reputation," and to count them "worthy of double honour." 3. *The ground of this claim is "for their work's sake."* Not for the mere office, which may be often filled unworthily, though it is still entitled to consideration, but for the sake of the "labours of love" involved in its faithful discharge. Ministers who "make full proof of their ministry" challenge the abiding respect of their flocks.—T. C.

Ver. 13.—*Inculcation of mutual peace.* "And be at peace among yourselves."

This is connected with the previous verse, for a faithful pastorate tends to unity and peace.

I. THIS PEACE DEPENDS UPON OUR DIVINE CALLING. For it is the, "peace unto which we are called" (Col. iii. 15).

II. IT IS ESSENTIAL TO GROWTH AND BLESSING. (Eph. iv. 3; Ps. cxxxiii. 1; Jas. iii. 18.)

III. IT IS ONE OF THE BLESSINGS ALWAYS TO BE PRAYED FOR. (Ps. cxxii. 6—8.)

IV. IT IS ONE OF THE BEATTITUDES WITH A PROMISE. (Matt. v. 9.)

V. IT IS ONE OF THE FAIREST GROWTHS OF THE SPIRIT. (Gal. v. 22.)—T. C.

Ver. 14.—*Mutual duties of Church members.* The Church must act as well as its pastors.

I. ADMONITION TO THE DISORDERLY. "Warn them that are unruly." 1. *The unruly are, literally, those who break rank, taking exceptional courses, to the injury of the peace or unity of the Church.* Probably the apostle refers to the unhinging effect of the error concerning the near approach of the advent, leading individuals to abandon work and loiter about in a sort of meddlesome idleness. 2. *Such persons need to be warned, even with sharpness of reproof, yet in love;* for "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, in all the Churches of the saints" (1 Cor. xiv. 33). Warn them to "do their own business, and work with their own hands."

II. COMFORT FOR THE FEEBLE-MINDED. "Comfort the feeble-minded." 1. *These persons were overburdened with sorrow on account of the dead, under the influence of error respecting their safety.* They were not intellectually feeble, but had become dispirited and desponding through their failure to realize the hope of the resurrection at the advent. 2. *They were to be comforted;* not rebuked or admonished for their sins, but exhorted lovingly in the truth. It is the Lord's way "to raise them that are bowed down," and "to comfort them which be in any trouble" (2 Cor. i. 4). There is "consolation in Christ."

III. SUPPORT FOR THE WEAK. "Support the weak." 1. *The weak in faith, or other Christian graces, who may still feel the lingering influence of Jewish prejudice and pagan delusions.* We are to "bear the infirmities of the weak." 2. *They must be sustained, not despised for their weakness.* "Be eyes to the blind; be feet to the lame." Thus "we fulfil the Law of Christ." We must "lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees" (Heb. xii. 12, 13).

IV. PATIENCE TOWARD ALL MEN. "Be patient toward all men." 1. *Patience or long-suffering, in view of the perverseness, or defects, or follies, or sins of men.* It points to a temper not easily moved or offended, to a disposition to bear and forbear after the example of that Father who "is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. iii. 9). This disposition greatly promotes the comfort and usefulness of life. 2. *It is to be exercised toward all men.* Even to those outside the household of faith who may gainsay or persecute the truth.—T. C.

Ver. 15.—*Abstinence from revenge, and the steadfast pursuit of good.* To a people freshly emerged out of paganism this counsel was still most appropriate, for the Greeks were remarkable for their undying feuds.

I. WARNING AGAINST RETALIATION. "See that none render evil for evil to any man." 1. *Retaliation is condemned both by the Old and the New Testaments.* (Lev. xix. 18; Rom. xii. 19.) 2. *It is condemned by Christ's beautiful example of forbearance.* (1 Pet. ii. 23.) "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not." 3. *It is expressly rebuked by Christ in the case of the disciples James and John.* (Luke ix. 54, 55.) 4. *It springs from a spiteful heart.* (Ezek. xxv. 15.) 5. *It indicates a want of trust in God.* (Prov. xx. 22.)

II. INCULCATION OF THE PURSUIT OF GOOD. "But ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves and to all men." Believers are not to resist evil, but to return good for evil—to overcome evil with good. 1. *The good to be done is after the example of Christ, who "went about every day doing good."* 2. *It is done in virtue of union with Christ.* (John xv. 4, 5; Phil. i. 11.) 3. *It is the preordained pathway of God's children.* (Eph. ii. 10.) 4. *Christians ought to provoke each other to good.* (Heb. x. 24.)



5. *It is a grand argument for the gospel.* (Matt. v. 16.) 6. *It is to be catholic in its spirit*; for it is to be done, not to believers only, but “to all men.” The believer is to have “brotherly kindness” as well as “love” (2 Pet. i. 7). 7. *It is to be earnestly pursued.* “Follow after that which is good.” (1) Because it glorifies God (Matt. v. 16). (2) Because God remembers it (Heb. vi. 9, 10). (3) Because it is an evidence of faith (Jas. ii. 14—20). (4) Because it shall be brought into judgment (2 Cor. v. 10).—T. C.

Ver. 16.—*The duty and the privilege of constant joy.* “Rejoice evermore.” (See homiletical hints on Phil. iii. 1; iv. 4).—T. C.

Ver. 17.—*The duty of constant prayer.* “Pray without ceasing.” There is a mutual affinity between joy, prayer, and thanksgiving, as we see by other passages of Scripture (Phil. iii. 4—6; Col. iv. 2).

I. PRAYER THE DUTY, THE PRIVILEGE, THE INTEREST, OF ALL BELIEVERS. 1. *It is a commanded duty.* (Matt. vii. 7.) 2. *It is a sign of conversion.* (Acts ix. 11.) 3. *Saints delight in it.* (Ps. xlii. 4; cxii. 1.) 4. *It is recommended:* (1) By the example of Christ (Luke xxii. 32). (2) By the experience of past mercies (Ps. iv. 1). (3) By the faithfulness of God (Ps. cxliii. 1). (4) By the fulness of the promises (Ps. cxix. 49; 1 John v. 15).

II. THE NECESSITY OF CONSTANT SUPPLICATION. “Pray without ceasing.” 1. *There is nothing in the words to justify the neglect of other duties.* The apostle travelled and preached and laboured with his hands as well as prayed; but he cultivated a constant spirit of supplication. It is not true, therefore, that it can be fulfilled only in idea. 2. *It is a command not to be fulfilled by set hours of prayer, much less by adherence to a monastic rigour of devotion.* Yet it is not inconsistent with set hours. The psalmist prayed at evening, morning, and noon (Ps. lv. 17). Yea, “seven times a day do I praise thee” (Ps. cxix. 164). Daniel prayed three times a day (Dan. vi. 10). 3. *The apostle enjoins a constant spirit of prayer* in view of our constant dependence on the Lord. Prayer should interspace all our works. The heart may rise to a throne of grace in inward prayer when the hands are busy with the duties of life.—T. C.

Ver. 18.—*The duty of thanksgiving.* It is the natural fruit of joy as it is the natural accompaniment of prayer. “In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”

I. THANKSGIVING IS THE EXERCISE OF A JOYFUL AND PRAYING HEART. 1. *It is a mark of the wicked that they have no thankfulness.* They who glorified not God “neither were thankful” (Rom. i. 21). It is a sign of the antichristian apostasy that men “shall be unthankful” (2 Tim. iii. 2). Since “every good gift and every perfect gift” comes from the Father of Lights, the guilt of such ingratitude is great. 2. *It is the mark of the saints in heaven that they are full of thanksgivings.* (Rev. xix. 6, 7; vii. 12.) 3. *It is likewise a mark of the saints on earth.* “Blessed are they which dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee” (Ps. lxxxiv. 4). They abound in faith with thanksgiving (Col. ii. 7). They offer sacrifices of thanksgiving (Ps. cxvi. 17). They habitually offer thanksgiving (Dan. vi. 10).

II. THANKSGIVING MUST BE UNIVERSAL IN ITS SPHERE. “In everything give thanks.” 1. *For the supply of our bodily wants.* (1 Tim. iv. 3, 4.) 2. *For the gift of Christ.* (2 Cor. ix. 15.) 3. *For the goodness and mercy of the Lord.* (Ps. cvi. 1.) 4. *In all circumstances of prosperity and adversity, joy and sorrow, health and sickness.* Job could say in the depth of his affliction, “Blessed be the Name of the Lord” (Job i. 8, 20, 21).

III. THE GROUND AND REASON OF THIS DUTY. “For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” The Scripture as well as the light of nature directs to it, as it sets forth that “good and perfect and acceptable will of God,” “Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me.” In Jesus Christ is this will revealed and made effectual; for all God’s mercies reach us through the channel of his mediation. Therefore we “are to give thanks unto God and the Father by him” (Col. iii. 17); therefore “by him let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually” (Heb. xiii. 15).—T. C.

Vers. 19—21.—*Exhortations regarding spiritual gifts.* These three verses refer to

one subject, the extraordinary manifestations of the Spirit so frequent in the Church at this period, but apply likewise to his ordinary influence in believers.

I. THE SIN AND DANGER OF QUENCHING THE SPIRIT. "Quench not the Spirit." Perhaps there was a tendency to repress spiritual utterances, either because they had become fanatical, or from an undue love of order. It is possible to resist the Spirit. God strives with man, who may yet resist all his importunities (Acts vii. 51), "insulting the Spirit of grace" (Heb. x. 29). Even in the case of believers, "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh" (Gal. v. 17). It is both sinful and dangerous for believers to "grieve the Holy Spirit of God, whereby they are sealed to the day of redemption" (Eph. iv. 30). The text suggests the idea of quenching a fire.

1. *The Spirit acts upon the believer's nature* like a fire, warming, purifying, refining.
2. *The fire may be quenched by neglecting it* quite as much as by casting water upon it. This is the tendency of neglect.
3. *Sin has a tendency to quench the Spirit*, as water quenches fire. We ought to stir up our gifts and graces that they may shine the brighter, and give both light and heat around us. Yet provision is made in the covenant of grace that the fire once kindled will never be quenched.

II. THERE MUST BE NO UNDERVALUATION OF PROPHESYINGS. "Despise not prophesyings." 1. *These were spiritual utterances*, sometimes in psalms and hymns, "for the edification and exhortation and comfort" of believers, though they had the effect sometimes of laying bare the hearts of unbelievers (1 Cor. xiv. 25). They were more important than other gifts of the Spirit, and therefore more to be coveted (1 Cor. xii. 31).
2. *They were, therefore, not to be despised.* (1) Perhaps there had been "false prophets" at Thessalonica who had tried to pervert the truth, or weak members who had abused the gift of prophecy. The tendency, therefore, to underrate the gift was natural, but not proper. (2) Perhaps the exercise of this gift created less wonder or made less visible impression than other gifts, like those of tongues and healing. Therefore it came to be rather despised.

III. THE NECESSITY OF TESTING SPIRITUAL GIFTS. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." Instead of rejecting prophesyings, they were to test them by a due spiritual discernment. 1. *They were to be tested:* (1) By a comparison with the original tradition given to them (2 Thess. ii. 2). (2) By a comparison with the prophesyings of others who sat as judges (1 Cor. xiv. 29). There was, besides, a supernatural gift of "discerning of spirits" (1 Cor. xii. 10, 14, 29). (3) By marking the practical fruits of these prophesyings. "Hold fast that which is good." Our Lord said, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matt. v. 15, 16). True doctrine is "according to godliness" (1 Tim. vi. 3). Thus Christians are to examine the grounds of their faith, to hold fast nothing that has not first been tried, and to retain only "that which is good." 2. *Believers have the capacity as well as the right to test all things.* They are "to try the spirits whether they are of God" (1 John iv. 1). (1) They are the spiritual; "they judge all things, yet they themselves are judged of no man" (1 Cor. ii. 15). They have "an unction from the Holy One, and they know all things" (1 John ii. 20). (2) A right state of heart is necessary to this power of insight. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God" (John vii. 17). "Walk as children of light . . . proving what is acceptable unto God" (Eph. v. 8—10).—T. C.

Ver. 22.—*Warning against every form of evil.* "Abstain from every form of evil," whether practical or doctrinal.

I. WE NEED TO BE WARNED AGAINST EVIL. 1. *Because we naturally tend to do evil.*
2. *Because evil is so injurious to our spirits, in repressing joy, prayer, and thanksgiving.*
3. *Because it gives offence to others.* Therefore we ought to abhor that which is evil, to cleave to that which is good.

II. THE FORMS OF EVIL ARE VERY VARIOUS, AND THEREFORE NOT EASILY DETECTED. Truth is one; error is manifold. Satan can disguise error under forms difficult of detection. It is sometimes difficult to decide what is evil. But "a sound heart is the best casuist."—T. C.

Vers. 23, 24.—*Prayer for the sanctification and preservation of Thessalonian*
I. THESSALONIANS. I

believers. I. IT IS A PRAYER FOR PERFECT SANCTIFICATION. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly." 1. *It is the design of the God of peace to do this.* Our Lord came to "save his people from their sins," to "redeem them from all iniquity." 2. *This sanctification is to extend to body, soul, and spirit.* (1) The body is to be sanctified, for it is to become an "instrument of righteousness," a "temple of the Holy Ghost," and eventually will receive its "redemption" in the resurrection (Rom. viii. 23). (2) The soul is to be sanctified. It is the principle of animal life. It is the self. The individual life of man is to be fully sanctified. (3) The spirit points to the inner life as coming from God, as the soul is life as constituted in man. The spirit is the higher aspect of self, the spiritual man being man as grace has reconstructed him. Yet the two words are parallel, though not equivalent; signifying not two separate natures in man, but two separate functions of the same nature. Provision is made for the sanctification of the whole man. 3. *It is not perfect in the present life.* The very prayer that God might sanctify them wholly implies that it was an attainment yet to be reached.

II. IT IS A PRAYER FOR THE PRESERVATION OF SAINTS TILL THE COMING OF CHRIST. "May your spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless." 1. *It is God only who can keep us.* He "keeps us from falling," that "he may present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24). He "keeps us from evil" (John xvii. 15). Saints are "kept by his power" through faith unto salvation (1 Pet. i. 5). 2. *The preservation is to extend till the second advent.* Not till death, but till his coming, implying that body and soul are alike to share in the final redemption. "He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it till the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. i. 6).

III. THE GROUND OF HIS CONFIDENCE IN GOD'S PURPOSE OF SANCTIFICATION AND PRESERVATION. "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." 1. *God's faithfulness is the guarantee.* He "also will do it." He will be faithful to his oath, to his promises, to his covenant; for he has promised to cleanse his people from all their sins, and preserve them to his kingdom and glory. God is faithful "by whom ye were called into the fellowship of his Son" (2 Cor. i. 8, 9). 2. *Effectual calling is another guarantee.* For whom he calls he justifies and glorifies. If he gives grace, he gives glory. The calling implies perfection, as it is the first step to it.—T. C.

Vers. 25—27.—*Three closing injunctions.* I. THE APOSTLE ASKS AN INTEREST IN THE PRAYERS OF THE THESSALONIANS. "Brethren, pray for us." 1. *He did not feel himself independent, in spite of all his high graces and gifts, of the intercessions of the humblest disciples.* His request is a proof of his deep humility. 2. *His position, with the care of all the Churches upon his heart, entitled him to their prayers.* He said to the Roman Christians, "Strive together with me in your prayers to God for me." (1) He wanted a door of utterance as well as a door of entrance. (2) He wanted to be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men. (3) He wanted to see the gospel flourishing in all the Churches.

II. EXHORTATION FOR CHRISTIANS TO SALUTE EACH OTHER. "Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss." Eastern customs differ from Western; but the salutation ought still to prevail in all our Churches, not in the letter, but in the spirit. It ought to express the feeling of oneness, of affection, of equality among the disciples of the same Lord. Christianity purifies and elevates worldly courtesy.

III. SOLEMN ADJURATION TO HAVE THE EPISTLE READ TO ALL THE BRETHREN. "I charge you by the Lord that this Epistle be read unto all the holy brethren." Conjectures have been freely expressed that the elders at Thessalonica may have been disinclined to read the letter to the Church. There is not much ground for the opinion. 1. *This Epistle was the first ever written by the apostle to any Church;* and as the disciples may not have known how to use it, he gives specific directions on the subject. 2. *He recognizes the right of all the brethren to read it.* Rome denies to the laity this right.—T. C.

Vers. 1—11.—*"The day of the Lord."* I. THE TIME OF ITS COMING. 1. *There was no real need to write to them about this.* St. Paul had spoken of it; it had been a principal subject of his teaching. They knew all that could be known, all that they needed to know for their souls' health. But there was a restless curiosity, an eager

longing "to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power." Such knowledge was not for the apostles; it is not for the Church. "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man." But, in spite of these words of Christ, human thought has ever busied itself, it busies itself still, to pry into this awful secret. St. Paul had told the Thessalonians all he knew; there was no need to write it again. But he deals gently with them. He tries to quiet their restless anxiety. 2. *They knew that it could not be known.* It cometh suddenly, when men are least expecting it; when they say, "Peace and safety." It cometh as a thief in the night. They knew the Lord's illustration. St. Paul had told them. It was enough for them to know. Suddenly, as the lightning that cometh out of the east and shineth even to the west, the Son of man shall come. That we know; nothing more can be known. It is a thought full of awfulness, full of deep lessons and solemn warnings.

II. READINESS FOR ITS COMING. 1. *Christians are not in the darkness.* Darkness is the element, the sphere of the unconverted life. Darkness is ignorance of God, ignorance of the atoning work of Christ, ignorance of the blessed influences of God the Holy Ghost. Such darkness is either intellectual, darkness of the understanding; or spiritual, darkness of the heart and will. The two act and react upon one another. Darkness of the understanding produces in some cases and in some measure darkness of the heart. Darkness of the heart often results in darkness of the understanding. There are cases of darkness which seem to us the most perplexing of problems; men and women who have from the very beginning of life been enveloped in an atmosphere of ignorance, brutality, and sin, from which there seems to be no escape—who seem to us, as people say, to "have no chance," no possibility, humanly speaking, of attaining to enlightenment and the knowledge of God. What can be done in such cases? We must, each one of us, do all that lies in our power to help the helpless and to teach the ignorant; and then, when we have "done what we could," we can only leave them, in the trustfulness of faith, to his mercy who, we know, will require little of those to whom little has been given. But the darkness which we have to face in our daily walk is, more commonly, not like this, but wilful darkness. "He that hateth his brother" (St. John says) "is in darkness even until now." Any wilful sin deliberately indulged darkens the heart. "If thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness." The soul that cherishes a secret sin cannot believe, cannot see God, cannot be in readiness for the coming of the Lord. If such are not awakened to a sense of guilt and danger, the great day must overtake them as a thief, coming upon them in all its sudden awfulness. 2. *They are sons of light.* "God hath shined in their hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The true light now shineth. We are in the light, the light of the knowledge of God, the light of the presence of God. We belong to the light; it is all around us; it is in us. Indeed, the true light "lighteth every man." The Lord is loving unto every man. "The Lamb of God taketh away [beareth] the sin of the world." We must believe, in spite of sad and dark appearances, that there is no child of man on whom the heavenly Father hath not shined; none who are left to perish without a hope of salvation. The light shineth upon all; but they are sons of light whose souls within are lighted with that heavenly glow, who come to the light and rejoice in the light, and in the brightness of that light—see what others cannot see because their eyes are holden—the fair beauty of the Lord, the exceeding loveliness of the blessed Saviour's life, the aureole of golden light that bathes the cross of Christ in a glory of unearthly radiance. 3. *Therefore they must walk in the light.* They must live in the consciousness of that light, feeling its warmth and glory; as they move hither and thither in their daily life, they must walk in the sense of that light which is all around them. It shows things in their true colours. Sin is hateful, loathsome; you see its utter hideousness when the light shines upon it. Holiness is fair and bright; you see its attractive beauty when the heavenly light shines on it in its glory. The light shines into our hearts; it shows us our guilt, our misery, our danger. But, blessed be God, it does more than that. It hath a purifying power; it cleanses what was unclean; it brightens what was dark. "If we walk in the light . . . the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." 4. *They are sons of day, therefore they must watch.* The light shows the danger of sloth; it rests upon those awful words, "Thou wicked and slothful servant," and brings them out into full distinctness. They must not sleep, as do others. Indiffer-

ence and apathy are deadly enemies of the soul. The unbelieving multitude sleep; they are thoughtless about their souls, careless of the awful destinies which lie before us. The believer will watch; for he will remember the reiterated commandment of his Lord, "Watch, therefore. . . . What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch." Watchfulness is thoughtfulness; it is a vivid interest in everything that belongs to the spiritual life, an earnest desire to quicken it into ever new energies, a freshness of spirit, an active vigilance in guarding against all the dangers and temptations that surround us. "They that sleep, sleep in the night," but we are sons of day. We must watch as men that wait for their Lord. We know not when he cometh; we must be watchful always lest that day overtake us as a thief. It cometh as a thief. This warning of our Lord is not only recorded in the Gospels, but St. Paul, St. Peter, St. John, re-echo the solemn words. It made a deep impression on the minds of the early Christians; witness the name Gregory ("watchful") so common in the ancient Church. Would that that impression remained, that we too might be stirred to ever-deepening watchfulness. "The Lord is at hand." 5. *They must be sober.* "They that be drunken are drunken in the night." The Christian must be sober. Intoxication causes drowsiness; it is inconsistent with watchfulness. The intemperate cannot watch. The Christian must be temperate in all things; strictly temperate as regards food and drink, for temperance is the fruit of the Spirit, and drunkenness is one of those works of the flesh of which it is written that "they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." He must be temperate in all his enjoyments; for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,—all these things intoxicate their votaries, and make them slothful and drowsy in the concerns of the soul. But we must be sober, for we are of the day; we walk in the light of day and are looking for the coming of the day of the Lord. 6. *They must be prepared for the assaults of temptation.* They must be clothed with the armour of light. (1) The breastplate of faith and love. The hosts of darkness will gather round the Christian warrior as he stands watchful at his post. They cannot harm him if he continue faithful; the fiery darts of the wicked one cannot pierce the breastplate of faith and love. Faith is trustfulness. The soul that trusts in Christ is fixed and steadfast. Trust not in earthly things; they will fail you at the last. But trust in Christ; he abideth faithful; he is able to save even to the uttermost; his love is stronger than death. Faith protects the Christian's heart. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Faith overcomes the world. Love springs out of faith, and quickens faith. Believe in Christ, and love him you must, for faith realizes his presence in all his grace and tenderness. "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us;" "We love him, because he first loved us." Love reacts on faith; for God, who is Love, can be known only of those who have learned of him the great lesson of love. "Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." Like is known by like. He who knows not in his own heart what it is to love, cannot know God, who is the eternal Love. Love grows out of faith, and love fills faith with life and joy and holy enthusiasm. Love and faith protect the Christian as he watches; they sustain his energies. Faith preserves him from anxious doubts; the holy love of God keeps out all carnal loves. (2) The helmet of the Christian warrior. The hope of salvation guards his head. Other hopes may fall in shattered ruins on him; they will not crush him; they may vex and bruise, but they will not reach a mortal part; they may strike him as he stands erect and fearless; they will glance off from the polished surface of the helmet of salvation. The blessed hope of life eternal living in the heart supports the Christian in toil, in sorrow, in sickness, and in death. "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three." He will watch who hath these blessed graces; he will persevere, faithful unto death, looking always for the coming of the great and awful day. 7. *God is their Strength.* Without him they can do nothing. He did not appoint us to wrath. He is our Father; he is not willing that any should perish. He willeth that all men should be saved. Salvation, great and blessed word, is what God willeth for us all. 8. *The work of the Lord Jesus.* Our salvation is his work. He died for us, on our behalf and in our stead; his precious death is the high example of entire self-sacrifice for the sake of others; it is the atonement for our sins. "For us." Those great words stimulate us to love and serve him; they should be constantly in our thoughts; they should fill us with wonder, awe, and adoring love. "For us," though we were sinners; "for us," though he is God; "for us"—we

can never reach the depths of mysterious, blessed meaning which lie hid in those two simple words. He died that we, whether we watch or sleep, while we remain among the living, watching for his coming, and while we sleep with those who are laid to sleep through Jesus, should ever live together with him. His death is our life; by his death he took away the power of sin, which is the death of the soul. He died that we might live in that holy life which is in fellowship with him. That life begins now. "Ye have eternal life," St. John says. Christ's saints live with him and in him, for he is their Life. They live with him during their earthly pilgrimage; they live with him in Paradise, where the holy departed are with Christ; they shall live with him in that glory which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man. 9. *Practical conclusion.* (1) They must comfort one another. The word wavers in its meaning between comfort and exhortation. The two ideas, indeed, run very near together, as the etymology of the English word "comfort" suggests. To comfort, according to its derivation, is to strengthen. Comfort, consolation, is a source of strength. The despondent, those who brood over their sufferings and fret themselves in their troubles, are timid, devoid of energy and strength. Comfort helps them to "lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees," and stimulates them to look forward to the future with hope and courage. The Thessalonian Christians needed both comfort and exhortation. They had a great trial of affliction; they suffered much persecution from the beginning. No earthly comfort is so great as the sympathy of loving Christian friends. And those who sympathize with us stir us up by their example, by their loving words; their sympathy implies exhortation; it issues in exhortation, it makes exhortation real and effective. (2) They must edify one another. To edify is to build up. The wise builder builds his house on the rock, which is Christ. He is the Foundation; Christians are "built up in him." In the deepest sense he is the Builder. "On this rock I will build my Church." But, St. Paul says, "we are labourers together with God." Such grace he gives to his servants that they are privileged to help on the great work, to build upon the one Foundation. There is no higher, holier work than this, to prepare the living stones, to build them up into the one holy temple, the Church of the living God. The Thessalonians were doing it. St. Paul recognizes their loving labours, and urges them to persevere. Be it ours to follow them.

LESSONS. 1. It is not for us to know the times and seasons; be not too curious; but: 2. Prepare in quiet faith: "the Lord is at hand." 3. Live as sons of light; pray for grace to realize the presence of God, to see the cross by faith, to watch in hope and love. 4. Each Christian, however humble, has his place in building up the Church of Christ; let each do his part.—B. C. C.

Vers. 12—22.—*Closing exhortations.* I. THE MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH. 1. *Their duties.* (1) They labour. The work of the Christian ministry involves much labour—unseen labour in prayer and study, outward labour in preaching, in visiting the sick and aged, in feeding the Church of God which he purchased with his own blood. They are unworthy of their high calling who do not labour. (2) They preside over the flock, but it is "in the Lord;" by his appointment, in his strength, in accordance with his will, with a view to his glory, not their own. They must not seek to be "lords over God's heritage," but rather be ensamples to the flock, first in humility, first in self-denial, first in Christian love. (3) They admonish—a difficult, a painful duty, but often the duty of a minister; not to be neglected by those who watch for souls as they that must give account, but to be performed in humility and gentleness, with many prayers for guidance and for wisdom. 2. *The respect due to their office.* St. Paul *beseeches* the Thessalonians (mark his earnestness) to recognize the labours of their presbyters; perhaps there had been some neglect of them. It is good for Christians themselves to know the ministers who work among them, to take a lively interest in their work, their difficulties, their necessities: so they may share in that holy work themselves. Such an interest will lead them to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake, for its dignity and importance, but also for the faithfulness with which it is performed. The indolent and careless will not win this esteem. Reverence towards those set over us and due subordination, tend to promote the peace of the Church. That peace is of the utmost moment. Our unhappy divisions give occasion to

the adversary to speak reproachfully, and draw Christians away from the quiet pursuit of holiness into the unhealthy atmosphere of controversy.

II. THE DUTIES OF THE BRETHREN GENERALLY. 1. *Admonition and encouragement.* All Christians must take their part in the great work of saving souls; all are responsible, in a greater or less degree, for the welfare of the souls that come within their influence. All true Christians must admonish when admonition is needed; all must comfort those who stand in need of comfort. All must support the weak, and all must practise patience towards all men, unbelievers as well as believers. For these duties are so many different phases of Christian love, and Christian love is the highest of all graces. The love of the brethren is the proof that we have passed from death unto life. Then the Christian who is living in that life which is hid with Christ in God must take a deep and holy interest in the souls around him. The nearer he lives to God the better he will be able to admonish, to comfort, to support; the more willing he will be to labour in the cause of Christ. 2. *They must teach the unlawfulness of revenge.* The heathen almost universally applauded it. To return evil for evil, they thought, was as commendable as to requite good with good. The Christian must learn of Christ, the blessed Master, to pray, "Father, forgive them." He must crush out of his heart all revengeful feelings; he must learn to love his enemies, to pray for those who use him spitefully. It is a hard lesson sometimes. We shall learn it if we are living by faith in the presence of the cross. He died for the Thessalonians when they were enemies; they must learn of him to be kind to all men, even to the unthankful and to the evil. 3. *Christian joy.* It is a duty, not merely a privilege. A sullen, joyless temper implies a want of faith, the absence of hope and love. "The kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Joy is one of the fruits of the Spirit. He dwelleth in the Christian heart, and his presence bringeth joy. There must be joy where God is; the joy of heaven lieth in this, "He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them." And the joy of the faithful on earth is joy in the Lord, joy in his presence, in his love. Not to rejoice is want of trustfulness in him whose love should gladden the Christian heart. Barrow begins his great sermon on this text with the words, "O good apostle, how acceptable rules dost thou prescribe! O gracious God, how gracious laws dost thou inspire!" but "res severa verum gaudium." Many rejoice at times, in seasons of excitement; but to rejoice evermore, in sickness, and pain, and disappointments, and bereavements—this is difficult indeed; this implies a high degree of self-mastery, a living faith in God. We must learn to regard joy as our bounden duty, a duty which flows out of the great debt of love which we owe to God. Joy is the expression of our gratitude; it ought to be the free-will offering of a thankful heart. "Rejoice evermore" is the commandment of the Lord. He who commands gives also power to obey. He giveth to all men largely. He gives his Holy Spirit to all who ask in faith, and with the Spirit comes the gift of joy. 4. *Perseverance in prayer.* The whole of the Christian life should be consecrated to God—every action, word, thought. This involves a constant reference of all the little details of our daily lives to the will of God. We should refer them all to him, as Hezekiah spread the letter of Sennacherib before the Lord. No emergency is so great as to keep the faithful Christian from his God, none of our little difficulties is so small as to make it needless or unseemly to consult the Lord in prayer. "Whatever ye do in word or in deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus." Thus the whole life must be sanctified by habitual communion with God, while in the stated hours of prayer the believer will constantly entreat the Giver of all good with unceasing and ever more urgent importunity for more abundant grace, for larger spiritual gifts, for strength from on high to offer daily a more acceptable service. Thus prayer will be without ceasing. The heart prays when the lips are silent. 5. *Thankfulness.* Thanksgiving must always accompany prayer. It springs out of faithful prayer; for faithful prayer brings us into the presence of God, and in that presence we must give thanks. Thanksgiving, like prayer, should be without ceasing, in everything. We thank God for his unspeakable gift, the gift of Christ; we thank him for our access to him in prayer and praise and holy sacrament; we thank him for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life. We must learn to thank him, not only in our joys, but in our sorrows too. We must thank him for his chastisements, for they are sent in love. "Hast thou suffered any evil," says Chrysostom; "if thou wilt, it is no evil; give thanks to God,

and the evil is turned to good." He practised what he taught; in the midst of cruel afflictions he died with the words, "Glory be to God for all things," on his lips. This is the will of God—God would have the Christian's life to be a life of joy, a life of unceasing prayer, of perpetual thanksgiving. This is his will in Christ Jesus, revealed in the words of Christ, exemplified in the life of Christ, rendered possible by the grace of Christ to those who abide in him. 6. *Spiritual gifts.* The Divine fire was kindled at the great day of Pentecost in the baptism of fire; the like holy flame burns in all true Christian hearts. It is of all gifts the most precious. It involves an awful responsibility. (1) It is our part to stir up the gift of God that is in us; to watch very carefully lest, through sin or carelessness or indifference, the holy fire lose its brightness and its power. The foolish virgins were suddenly aroused to the consciousness that their lamps were going out. The Lord was come; they had no oil, they were not ready. It was too late. Arise and trim your lamps; take warning in time; quench not the Spirit. An unclean life, says Chrysostom, quenches that holy fire; so does apathy, indifference in religion. Sin is like water poured upon the flame. There is no fellowship between light and darkness; the Holy Spirit dwelleth not in the impure heart. Indifference gradually quenches the fire. The lamp will not burn without the oil; the daily renewal of the Holy Ghost is necessary for the support of the spiritual life within us. The Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul; he may depart from us if we live, like Saul, in wilfulness and disobedience. It is a fearful thought that we have the awful power of quenching that Spirit which is the very life of our souls. It should stimulate us to constant, anxious watchfulness. (2) Quench not the Spirit in others; despise not prophesying, but prove all things. There is a holy enthusiasm which comes from God; there is a fanaticism, a mere fervour of excitement, which is not of God. We must not believe every spirit, lest we be carried about with every blast of vain doctrine. We are bidden to "try the spirits whether they are of God." There were prophesying in the apostolic times, flowing from the direct inspiration and impulse of the Holy Spirit; there are such utterances now. There were then, and there are now, counterfeit likenesses of these spiritual gifts. There is need of care. God giveth to his chosen a power of spiritual discernment. "He that is spiritual judgeth all things;" he will hold fast that which is good. 7. *All evil must be avoided.* Every form of evil; little sins, as they are called, as well as great sins. Little sins are the first symptoms of the deadly disease. It may be checked at its outbreak; if neglected, it may slay the soul. The danger is great; the enemy is awful in his power and malignity. Hate all that comes from him.—B. C. C.

Vers. 23, 24.—*The result of obedience to these commandments—sanctification.* I. IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD. 1. *Peace.* Peace is the blessed fruit of obedience. Be careful for nothing; live in prayer and thanksgiving, and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and thoughts. But it comes from God. He is the God of peace. It is his; "My peace," the Lord Jesus says. It is God who maketh peace, who reconciles the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. 2. *Holiness.* Holiness is the sum of all Christian graces. All the precepts contained in the previous verses are here taken together; they meet and are summed up in holiness. But no human effort can sanctify the heart without the grace of God. Therefore the apostle is not content with exhorting the Thessalonians; he prays that God may sanctify them. May he himself (he says emphatically), "the God of peace, sanctify you wholly." He goes on to expand the last word.

II. IT MUST PERVADE THE WHOLE BEING. 1. *The spirit.* This is the highest part of our immaterial nature, the breath of life, inbreathed by Almighty God. It is the part receptive of Divine communications, which, in the regenerate, holds converse with God; which is the sphere of the operations of God the Holy Ghost. That man is spiritual in whom the spirit rules; he is natural (*ψυχικός*) in whom the soul (*ψυχή*) has usurped the place of the spirit. The evil spirit seeks to enslave the spirit of man; he strives to enter in and dwell in the spirit which should be God's. The peace of God is the true garrison; it guards the heart and thoughts of the faithful, leaving no ingress for the wicked one. 2. *The soul.* Each of the two words is sometimes used for our whole invisible nature; but, when distinguished from the spirit, the soul is the lower part of our immaterial being, which belongs in common to the whole animal creation;

the seat of the appetites, desires, affections. Those men in whom the animal soul predominates are called by St. Jude "sensual, not having the spirit" (*ψυχικοί, πνεῦμα μὴ ἔχοντες*). The soul is sanctified when it submits itself to the divinely enlightened spirit, when all its appetites, feelings, longings, are controlled and regulated by the sanctified spirit. 3. *The body.* The Christian body is a holy thing. It should be the temple of the Holy Ghost; it should be presented unto God a living sacrifice. It is sanctified when it is ruled by the spirit, when it is kept pure from the defilements of sensual sin, when its members are made instruments of righteousness unto God. The apostle prays that the whole man, spirit, soul, and body, may be preserved in the whole sphere of its existence, so as to be without blame in the great day. 4. *How is this possible?* God is faithful; he will do it. He calleth us. His calling is not vain, his promises are not delusive; they are true, for he is the Truth. He will do it—all that he has promised, all that we pray for, more than we pray for, above all that we can ask or think; for his power worketh in us. He will do it. He will give us his Holy Spirit; he will sanctify us wholly if we yield ourselves to his purifying influences; he will preserve our entire being blameless at the coming of the Lord, if only we persevere—if we abide in him. This little verse has been well called "the sum of all consolation."

LESSONS. 1. Work, but pray. Be obedient, but always look to God, and trust only in his grace; it is he that giveth holiness. 2. Pray for entire sanctification. Body, soul, and spirit—all are God's; glorify him in all. 3. Obey his calling; he will fulfil his promises.—B. C. C.

Vers. 25—28.—*Conclusion.* I. HE ASKS FOR THEIR PRAYERS. He, the great apostle, begs for the prayers of these neophytes, these babes in Christ. It shows: 1. *His humility.* 2. *The value of prayer.* A good man has said, "Prayer is possession. Faithful prayer is the sure possession of all that the redeemed will of man can desire. The man who is full of prayer is full of power. I would rather have the gift of a brother's faithful prayers than of his plentiful substance. And I feel that when I have given to a brother my faithful prayers I have given him my best and greatest gift." 3. *The duty of praying for the clergy.* They have a great charge, an awful responsibility. They might well shrink from the burden, conscious as they are of sin and weakness. But they work, if they are faithful, in the strength of God and in the strength of prayer—their own prayers and the prayers of the Church. The prayers of the Church are their due, for it is the commandment of the Lord. When they fail in energy, in self-denial, in holy example, it may be in part the fault of those who do not pray, as they are bidden, for the ministers of God.

II. THE KISS OF PEACE. St. Paul four times, St. Peter once, bid Christians to salute one another with a holy kiss. The practice was universal in ancient times; it was associated with the Holy Communion. Now it exists only in the Coptic Church of Egypt. The outward form has passed away; ancient customs may be disused when changes in habits and feeling render them no longer suitable. The sacred duty of brotherly love remains unchanged for ever. "By this shall men know that ye are my disciples, when ye have love one towards another."

III. THE EPISTLE TO BE READ IN THE CHURCH. Mark his earnestness: he adjures them by the Lord. It was his first Epistle. This solemn injunction was more needed now than afterwards. Then the Epistle was to stand on a level with the ancient Scriptures; it was to be read publicly, as Moses and the prophets were read in the synagogues. It was to be read to *all*. The open Bible must be given to all. All need its holy lessons; all have a right, by the gracious gift of God, to the blessings which it offers.

IV. THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. He begins his Epistle with grace; he ends it with grace. The grace of God is the beginning and the end of our salvation. "By the grace of God I am what I am;" "By grace are ye saved." All our truest happiness here, all our hopes for blessedness hereafter, come from the grace of God.

LESSONS. 1. Try to realize the great value of prayer; desire the prayers of the saints. 2. Pray for the clergy; it is a sacred duty. 3. Love the brethren. 4. The Bible is a precious book; see that you prize it.—B. C. C.

Vers. 1—11.—*Exhortation in view of the Lord's coming.* I. HOW THE DAY OF THE

LORD IS SUDDEN AND UNEXPECTED IN ITS COMING. "But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that aught be written unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." By the same method which is followed in ch. iv. 9, the apostle seeks to impress on the Thessalonians a certain point relating to the times and the seasons which make up the period of the Lord's dealing with men. This related more particularly to the day of the Lord, the day when the Lord is to descend to earth, which is to be thought of as the completing point of the times and the seasons. It is practically to each of us the day of our death. When with them he had taken care that they should accurately understand the sudden and unexpected nature of the advent. There were decisive words of the Lord on which to proceed. "But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only;" "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." There was even the same image employed by our Lord which is employed here. "But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what hour the thief was coming, he would have watched, and not have left his house to be broken through." As a thief, without notice given and under cover of the night, approaches the dwelling which its occupant thinks secure, so stealthily approaches the day of the Lord. To all alike the uncertainty exists, and will exist. All fixings of the time, such as are sometimes attempted, are wholly unwarranted. God does not mean that either the Church or the world should know the time, any more than he means that any of us should know the time of our death.

II. HOW TO THE CARNALLY SECURE THE DAY OF THE LORD IS TO COME AS A TERRIBLE SURPRISE. "When they are saying, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall in no wise escape." The image is carried forward, and we are to think of those who confine their interest to the earthly sphere, and do not dream of their possession as ever to be disturbed. But, having sown carnal security, they are to reap *destruction*, and not only in their earthly but also in their higher interest. It is a strong word which is employed, and corresponds to "wrath," which is afterwards employed. This feeling of carnal security grows upon men. At first they chide themselves that they neglect Christ and their everlasting salvation. But, carried forward by the desire of earthly gratification and in confidence in their own strength, they find excuses for the course which they are following. A state of moral *darkness* is produced in them. They become blinded to the character of God, and the opposition which is ever widening between their life and the will of God. The result is, that qualms of conscience leave them, and they say, "I have a feeling of peace within, and there is no trouble from without." But just when they come to this height of carnal security, then sudden destruction comes upon them, from which there shall be no escape. Thus, it would seem, will it be at last. All men will not be ready for the descending Lord. "As were the days of Noah, so shall be the coming of the Son of man. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall be the coming of the Son of man." So it would seem is it, anticipatively, now. Men go on in their sinful courses, until they are suddenly overtaken by death and destruction.

III. HOW TO SONS OF LIGHT AND SONS OF THE DAY THE DAY OF THE LORD SHOULD NOT BE A SURPRISE. "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief: for ye are all sons of light, and sons of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness." The Thessalonian brethren are excluded from the darkness which is implied in the state of carnal security; it was not, therefore, designed that that day should overtake them as a thief. The *class* to which they, as Christians, properly belonged, was that of *sons of light and sons of the day*. They are those to whom the Lord has been revealed, especially to whom it has been revealed that he will come, and who thus have light *in* them. They are those upon whom the Sun of righteousness has risen, making day *around* them. Welcoming the light, even in its reproofing power, they come to be made of light and enveloped with light, so that they are sons of light (which is the Divine nature) and sons of the day (which is the Divine encompassment). When it is always light, the thief has not opportunity of approach-

ing without being seen. So those who have abundance of light in them and around them should not be surprised by the day of the Lord. The *class* from which *we* as Christians are excluded is that of those who are *of the night and of darkness*. They are those who have moral night drawn around them. They are those into whose nature the light of God's mercy and truth has not penetrated. Loving the darkness rather than the light, because their deeds are evil, they come to have darkness as their surrounding and their nature, so that they are of the night and of darkness. It was open to the apostle, from the use of similar expressions by our Lord ("sons of this world," "sons of the devil"), to have said sons of the night and sons of darkness. He seems to have chosen his language purposely to avoid the idea of freedom, to bring out the idea of *servitude*. They are not like the free sons of light and free sons of the day. They are rather those who are hemmed in by the night, who are enslaved to darkness. When there is darkness in and around a dwelling there may be said to be an invitation to the thief to approach. So those who have darkness in and around their being may be said to invite a surprise from the day of the Lord.

IV. HOW WE ARE BOUND, AS ENLIGHTENED CHRISTIANS, TO WATCH AND BE SOBER. "So then let us not sleep, as do the rest, but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night." There is put forward what we are *not to do*. Let us not sleep, as do the rest of mankind. Sleeping implies obliviousness and inactivity. The rest of mankind are in an oblivious, inactive state, especially with regard to the solemn issues of life. Let us who have light not be like them. What we are *to do* is to *watch*. We are to have the wakeful activity of the sentinel at his post. He knows not from what side or what hour the enemy may approach, so he has altogether and always to be vigilant. In like manner, let us take full account of the fact that death is coming. And, seeing we know not how or what hour it may come, let our vigilance all round never sleep. What we are *to do* is also *to be sober*. A subject should be in a *fit* state when ushered into the presence of his sovereign. It will be a solemn thing for us to be ushered into the presence of the Lord at death; and we should be in a fit state for the occasion. We should especially have our appetites in proper restraint. We should have the full command of our powers. We should be so employed from moment to moment that, when the last moment comes, we can fitly leave our employments and pass into the presence of our Judge. Not to be doing *this*, is to be conforming to *unenlightened* practices. "They that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night." The literal fact is stated as the basis for thought. Night is the congenial time for *sleep*. So those who are in the night of sin are in a drowsy, unalarmed state with regard to their spiritual concerns. They do not take into account that they have to meet death, and yet, however deep their sleep, they have to meet it and the realities to which they will be wakened up after death. Night is also the congenial time for *drunkenness*. How much of the drinking that is to be deplored goes on after darkness has set in! So those who are in the night of sin are in a state of spiritual intoxication. And that is the worst thing that can be said of the literal drunkard. His spiritual nature is in a bad state. In not restraining his appetites he is rebelling against God. In continuing in sin he is hardening his heart. And he is not fit for passing into the presence of his Judge. And so is it, too, with those who are drunken with the world's engagements and cares. They become incapacitated for spiritual exercise, and for the enjoyment of the Lord's presence. "But take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come on you suddenly as a snare."

V. HOW WE ARE TO GIVE PROOF THAT WE ARE SOBER BY BEING ARMED WITH FAITH, LOVE, AND HOPE. "But let us, since we are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation." Having the light of day, and knowing what is coming, let us, as sober men, take all due precautions. For us to be forewarned should be to be forearmed. It is only *defensive* armour that is thought of here as brought into requisition. The idea seems to be, that we are to be armed against all that would unfit us for our Lord's coming. 1. *The breastplate*. This is a double piece of armour. It is faith and love combined. Faith apprehends the Lord's coming, in opposition to blind unbelief which says, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were." Faith defends

by encircling us with the Divine strength, which is as though every part of our defenceless hearts were covered with armour. But faith only rightly defends when, at the same time, love gives Christ the possession of our hearts. It is the world that tempts us to forget the Lord's coming, to make no preparation for death. When our hearts are filled with love to the Saviour, we are enabled to keep out the world. The breastplate of our defence being completed by love, brings it into agreement with what, in Eph. vi. 14, and also in Isa. lix. 17, is called "the breastplate of righteousness." 2. *The helmet.* This is a single piece of armour. In Eph. vi. 17, and also in Isa. lix. 17, it is simply called "the helmet of salvation." But what is meant is what is here called "the hope of salvation." We have a certain experience of salvation already in the working of faith and love. Hope reaches beyond this experience forward to the salvation which is to be completed at the Lord's coming. This hope is a defence to us, as the helmet used to be to the warrior. Wearing this provided armour, we can hold our head high and, scathless above present troubles. Let us, then, as sober men, not unclasp our breastplate, not lay aside our helmet.

VI. HOW THE SALVATION HOPED FOR HAS BEEN MADE A DIVINE CERTAINTY TO US. "For God appointed us not unto wrath, but unto the obtaining of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ." For those who are sunk in spiritual slumber and intoxication there is an appointment unto *wrath*. The Divine displeasure must be manifested against the rebellious course which they have been following. But for us who are acting as sober men there is an appointment unto the *obtaining of salvation* through our Lord Jesus Christ, *i.e.* at his coming. And what God has appointed will be carried out. A soldier endures in the hope of victory. But the victory is to him an uncertainty; it may not be realized, or he may not live to share in it. But the Christian soldier has a Divine appointment on which to proceed. If even now we take Christ as our Saviour, and from this point wait for his coming, then God intends that we shall conquer. Let us seize the advantage of our position. While we have our faith and love in vigorous exercise, let us know also the sustaining power of a lively hope.

VII. HOW THE OBTAINING OF SALVATION HAS BECOME ASSURED TO US. "Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him." 1. *Our life has its source in Christ's death.* Christ died for our benefit, and, by implication, in our stead. He died in the way of making satisfaction for our sin. In him, as our Representative or Head, we obtain the benefits of his work. It is as though we had died, as though we had made satisfaction for sin. Thus in condescending love, in accordance with eternal principles, are we introduced into salvation. 2. *The final end of Christ's death is that we should live together with him.* Christ died with this view, that we should ultimately live along with him, and have fellowship with him; we entering into his thoughts and delighting in his love, while he enters into our thoughts and delights in our love. 3. *This end is independent of our waking or sleeping at Christ's coming.* Our waking or sleeping is *accidental*; the essential thing is that we shall have fellowship with Christ, and fellowship, as it then shall be, in the body. Both classes, those who wake and those who sleep, have the same reason for assuring themselves that they shall live together with him, *viz.* in the fact that he has died to merit it for them, as he lives to secure it for them. Those who wake shall be changed without the union between soul and body being broken; and, changed, *they shall live together with him.* Those who sleep have the union between the soul and body broken, without any break in the union between the soul and Christ and in fellowship with him; and, raised from their graves, *they shall live together with him.* Thus the ultimate state of both classes is to be the same, the apostle returning here to the conclusion reached in ch. iv. 17, where it is said of the same two classes united that they shall be for ever with the Lord.

VIII. HOW IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES THEY ARE TO ACT TOWARD EACH OTHER. "Wherefore exhort one another, and build each other up, even as also ye do." There is an unhappy change from "comfort" to "exhort" in the translation. It ought to be "comfort," as in the parallel verse at the close of the previous paragraph. They were to comfort one another with what was blessed in the Lord's coming. They were also to edify each other, in preparation for the Lord's coming—communicating knowledge to each other, praying for each other, pressing duty on each other, stimulating each other by example. This they were doing, and in that way were admirably

answering the ends of their being in a Christian society. But let them go on, and not, while only a little away from the starting-point, suppose that they have reached finality. Let us, too, make the end of our being in a Christian society comfort and, especially, edification to all the members.—R. F.

Vers. 12—22.—*Exhortations. I. DUTY TOWARD THE PRESIDENTS.* “But we beseech you, brethren, to know them that labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them exceeding highly in love for their work’s sake.” The Greek bears that those who labour, preside, and admonish are all one class. From other places in the New Testament we must understand that the reference is to the class of the elders. “And when they had appointed for them elders in every Church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they had believed.” “For this cause,” Paul says to Titus, “left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge.” From 1 Tim. v. 17 it appears that there were elders who simply ruled, and others who both ruled and taught. The language employed in the description of the elders here does not require a restriction in the application to teaching elders. It can only be said that the greater extent of their duties warrants a special application to them. There is put forward the idea of their being *workers*. In any office the first thing to be looked to is the amount of real honest work that is done in it. Certainly it is not meant that any ecclesiastical office should be a sinecure. There was spiritual work to be done among the Thessalonians, and there were those who were appointed for the doing of it. These did their work even to *weariness*. Next to their being workers, they were *presidents*. In 1 Tim. v. 17 the elders are described as thus ruling or presiding. In this presidency there is implied the possession of ecclesiastical power; but it is with limitations. Believers stand in an immediate *personal* relation to the Lord. But there is also the relation in which believers stand *collectively* to the Lord. In this relation Christ is not only President; but there are those who in each Christian society preside in the Lord, *i.e.* they preside in his Name, they represent his authority in the relation. To them belongs the power of the keys, or of admitting and excluding. To them it belongs to preside at the ordinance of the supper. To them it belongs to sit in judgment in matters connected with the efficient working of the society. As presidents, they are also *monitors*, not restrictively teachers. It belongs to them as characterized by piety and practical wisdom, and as foremost in every good work themselves, in a special manner, in virtue of their office, to press duty on those over whom they have been placed, to stir up the negligent, to administer rebuke to the erring. It is the duty of the members of a Christian society toward their laborious presidents and monitors to *know* them. It is usual to take this knowing as equivalent to knowing *with appreciation*, which is afterward defined as esteeming in love. It seems better not to bring forward the ideas of esteem and love, but to think only of that on which the esteem and love are founded, *viz.* such a *marking* of the presidents as leads to their being esteemed and loved. The esteem is to be founded on the work belonging to their office. They are engaged in the Lord’s work, in seeking the spiritual good of those over whom they have been placed. And as that is the most important of all kinds of work, they are not only to be esteemed, but esteemed *exceeding highly* for their work’s sake. While they are to be esteemed, they are also to be *loved*. Love is to be the element in which the esteem is to have its subsistence and nourishment. They are not to be judged harshly, but, in love, a kindly view is to be taken of them, and their defects overlooked.

II. DUTY OF REGARDING THE PEACE OF THE CHRISTIAN CIRCLE. “Be at peace among yourselves.” Our Lord exhorts the twelve in almost the same terms: “Be at peace one with another.” The exhortation means that we are to cultivate toward the members of the Christian circle such good feeling as will dispose us not only to refrain from strife, but also to be on good terms with them. And if we are to be peaceably disposed, as we are elsewhere exhorted, toward all men, much more are we to be peaceably disposed, as we are here exhorted, to those to whom we stand in nearer alliance and engagement, who are subjects with us of the same Prince of peace. The most fruitful cause of congregational or more widely ecclesiastical dispeace is *fondness for power or honour*. It was when the twelve had disputed one with another who was

the greatest (Mark ix. 34), and had turned against one who used Christ's Name yet followed not them (Mark ix. 38), that they were exhorted to be at peace one with another (Mark ix. 50). John refers to a certain Diotrephes, in a Church to which he wrote, who loved to have the pre-eminence among them. There are those who are more concerned to advance themselves, or their family connection, or their party, than the common ends for which the society exists. A co-operating cause is *prejudice*. There are those who are more attached to opinions hastily formed, or traditionally received, or to which they are constitutionally inclined as more liberal or more conservative, than to the truth honestly inquired into. When, with this, there conspires worldly motive, leading to worldly policy, the result, on occasion or, it may be, on little occasion, is dispeace. One cure for dispeace is respect for the properly constituted authorities, or *good feeling toward the presidents*. This will often carry a society through a difficult trial. A more effective cure is *abundance of Christian work*. It was when the twelve were in the way (unemployed so far) that they disputed who was the greatest. When afterward they were in the midst of their work, the question would not be who was the greatest, but who could do the most work for Christ. For a Church to be actively engaged in real work for the Master is to be in the best position for its own peace. Pray, then, for the peace of Jerusalem, and for its orderliness and holy activity, as conducive to peace.

III. DUTY TOWARD THREE CLASSES WITHIN THE CHRISTIAN CIRCLE. 1. *The disorderly*. "And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the disorderly." This class is described by a word which is used of soldiers who do not keep their rank. There were those in the Thessalonian Church who were out of rank, in the way of being negligent of their business, under the influence of the coming of Christ. In Christian Churches still there are those who are out of rank, in the way of being careless in attendance on ordinances, in the way of being dissipated, in the way of being chargeable with dishonourable actions. If it is a grave fault to be disorderly in a military sense, it is no less grave a fault to be disorderly in a Christian sense. Must it not be offensive to him who is pre-eminently charged with the order of the Church, the Captain of our salvation? And his command, laid not merely on the presidents but on all, is that such should be admonished. They all need to be admonished to the performance of the duty with regard to which they are at fault; and some of them need to be admonished to take the first step in the Christian life. 2. *The faint-hearted*. "Encourage the faint-hearted." In our Churches there are those who are faint-hearted on account of the loss of friends, as the Thessalonians were faint-hearted on account of the supposed fate of Christian friends taken away before the coming. There are those who are depressed by the state of their temporal affairs, as the Thessalonians would have a depressing influence in the way in which maintenance and home and even life were affected by persecution. There are always those who are apt to be faint-hearted on account of their spiritual state. Have they a real interest in Christ? Are they making progress in the Christian life? Are they doing any good? Are they having an influence for good upon those over whom they are immediately placed? The command of Christ, laid on all, is that such are to be encouraged. Let them be encouraged by the thought of the kind Providence that is exercised over them. Let them be encouraged to the exercise of faith. "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." 3. *The weak*. "Support the weak." There would be those among the Thessalonians who felt the weakening influence of the heathenism out of which they had come. Heathen habits could not be laid aside in a day. So there are those in our Churches who are anxious to do well, but are apt to stumble from the strength of evil habit. The command of Christ, laid on all, is that such are not to be left to stand or fall by themselves; but they are to be supported by sympathy and counsel and example until they attain to greater moral strength—as infants, or those weakened by disease, need to be supported, until they can go about freely.

IV. THE ONE DUTY TOWARD ALL WITHIN THE CHRISTIAN CIRCLE. "Be long-suffering toward all." It seems better to confine the reference to the Christian circle, and to consider the reference as widened in the following verse. This is the condition of mind that will fit us for dealing with all. It was not unfitting that the duty should

be laid upon a young Church like that of Thessalonica. Young Christians are of a sanguine disposition. In their own enthusiasm they look for others being enthusiastic. They need, in their experience of the difficulty of evil being cast out of their own hearts, of keeping up their own enthusiasm, to be taught the lesson of patience. Let them not be less earnest, but let them bear long, in the hope of seeing those who are lukewarm and faulty brought into a better state.

V. DUTY ESPECIALLY TOWARD THOSE WHO INJURE US. "See that none render unto any one evil for evil; but always follow after that which is good, one toward another, and toward all." The heathenish idea is to return evil for evil. Even Aristotle regarded it not less reasonable to return evil for evil, than to return good for good; "for otherwise," he says, "if a man must not retaliate, his condition appears to be as bad as slavery" ('Ethics,' bk. v. ch. 5). This heathenish disposition to take revenge on those who injure us needs to be conquered by us. Hence there is enjoined on us care: "Take heed that none render unto any one evil for evil." There is danger, if we are not careful, of our giving way to revengeful feelings. The Christian idea is that we are to resist not evil: "Whosoever smiteth thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." The meaning here is that, instead of returning evil for evil, we are to do kind offices to those who injure us. This is the best way of gaining our offending brethren. It is also the best way of gaining over them that are outside. There is no more powerful argument in favour of Christianity than its conquest of revengefulness, its disposing us to return good for evil.

VI. DUTY OF REJOICING. "Rejoice always." The happy God designs us to be happy like himself, and not merely in heaven. We cannot, indeed, have a light heart when we think of the evil in us and around us. But while sorrowful, we can always rejoice in the thought of our Christian advantages. "He that hath the inexhaustible Spring of good for his portion, that hath his welfare entrusted in God's most faithful hand, that hath the infinite Beauty and Excellency for the perpetual object of his contemplation, that enjoyeth the serenity of a sound mind, of a pure heart, of a quiet conscience, of a sure hope, what can he want to refresh or comfort him? If we scan all the doctrines, all the institutions, all the precepts, all the promises of Christianity, will not each appear pregnant with matter of joy, will not each yield great reason and strong obligation to this duty of rejoicing evermore?" (Barrow).

VII. DUTY OF PRAYER. "Pray without ceasing." This cannot mean that prayer is to occupy our whole time. For prayer is only one duty, and we have to proportion our time between our various duties. But it means that we are to make prayer part of the great business of our life, and not a by-business. It means that we are to connect prayer with the principal occasions of our life. It means that in particular matters we are to pray on, until we succeed in the object of our requests. It means that we are to have stated times for prayer, especially the natural seasons of morning and evening. It means that in the intensity of our earnestness we are to overleap these stated times. "Devotion is the best food of our souls, which preserveth their life and health, which repaireth their strength and vigour: if we, therefore, long abstain from it, we shall starve or pine away; we shall be faint and feeble in all religious performances; we shall have none at all, or a very languid and meagre piety" (Barrow).

VIII. DUTY OF THANKSGIVING. "In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to you-ward." To give thanks means that, sincerely, duly sensible of our benefits, we are to make cheerful acknowledgment of them to God. To give thanks in everything means that we are to thank God, not only in great things, but also in small things; not only in rare things, but also in common things. It means that we are to thank God, not only in present things, but for past mercies as well, and even for what is laid up for future enjoyment. It means that we are to thank God, not merely in things affecting ourselves, but also in things affecting others. It means that we are to thank God, not merely in prosperous things, but also in adverse things, recognizing the merciful moderating of them, the merciful design in them, the supporting grace under them, and the benefit resulting from them. It means that we are to thank God, not merely in things affecting our bodies, but also in things affecting our souls. The duty of thanksgiving is here enforced by the consideration that this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to us-ward. In Christ Jesus he is infinite kindness, always overflowing in blessing on us. How fitting, then, that we should, through

Christ Jesus, "offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, the fruit of our lips"! This has the distinction of being the most delightful of all duties. "For praise and thanksgiving are the most delectable business of heaven; and God grant they may be our greatest delight, our frequent employment upon earth" (Barrow).

IX. DUTY TOWARD THE SPIRIT. "Quench not the Spirit." The Spirit is compared here, as in other places in Scripture, to fire. There is the beginning of spiritual life in every man. There is the depraved nature, but there is also the Spirit with his vital energy to be cherished or quenched. It is especially in connection with the gospel that the Spirit is given to men. In the gospel there is presented a Divine call to accept of Divine mercy, and there is, in connection with it, a Divine warning against refusing Divine mercy. "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." The Spirit, in the Word read or preached, brings the gospel call to bear upon the conscience and heart. The feeling that we ought to accept of salvation and not throw away our existence, the desire to give Christ our confidence and not spurn his love, is the working of the Spirit. And, in providence after providence, does the Spirit more gently whisper to us, or more loudly rouse us up to the importance of the Divine call and warning. It is suggested by the context, that what those who have felt the power of the Spirit have to fear is the repression of enthusiasm. Let them give free outlet to the working of the Spirit, and not be deterred by the conventionalities even of religious society. If they feel prompted to pray, let them not restrain prayer. If they feel prompted to study God's Word, let them sit down and pore over it. If they feel prompted to throw themselves into Christian work, let them not hold back. It was by a strange perversity of will on the part of Saul that he was deserted by the Spirit. David feared that his outbreak of sin would drive away the Holy Spirit from him. What prevents men feeling the power of the Spirit is especially an irregular life. They turn away from good, and give the reins to their passions, and another spirit than God's takes possession of them. But there is not needed outward irregularity to quench the Spirit. The essential thing is the withdrawing of the mind from the range of the Divine revelation, the paying no heed to the Divine voice, the smothering good feeling even under the ordinary engagements of life, the neglecting to follow up good impressions by a decisive step for Christ. The result in the following out of trial is a state of mind in which there is an insensibility to the importance of the Divine call and warning. Conviction of sin or uneasiness about it ceases; interest in what is good dies out. The Spirit of God takes his departure, and an evil spirit takes full possession. There is this encouraging thought to those who have been resisting and grieving the Spirit, that while there is the slightest thought of good remaining in their hearts, it may be fanned into a flame. The Spirit, long slighted, at last cherished, will come, and with his vital energy fill their whole being.

X. DUTY WITH REGARD TO PROPHESYINGS. "Despise not prophesyings." These were special manifestations of the Spirit. As in the Corinthian Church, and also in the Galatian Churches, so in the Church of Thessalonica, there was the presence of miracles. There was the gift of healing; there was also the gift of tongues. As striking manifestations the use they served was especially in impressing and drawing the attention of them that were outside. Prophecyings were intelligent and, probably, impassioned utterances of Divine truth under the influx of the Spirit. As such the use they served was especially in promoting the edification of the Church. Let none, then, run the risk of quenching the Spirit by placing a low value on his less striking but far more important manifestations.

XI. DUTY OF PROVING ALL THINGS. "Prove all things." The language is taken from the art of the assayer. He has special skill in applying tests, with the view of discovering what is real and what is counterfeit in metals, what is good coin and what is bad coin. So the Christian assayer is to be specially skilled in testing the real nature of things. There is nothing in the language to restrict the reference to the prophecyings which have been mentioned. It is not said "all prophecyings," or "all these things." And if there is an antithesis, as some authorities have it, in the assertion of "but," yet is it preserved by regarding prophecyings as included among all things. The wideness of the reference is confirmed by the consideration that things as proved are divided into things to be chosen and things to be rejected. In prophecyings, as

inspired, there was no element to be rejected. Proving them could only mean learning to put due value upon them, partly in comparison with other Divine gifts. Ordinary teachings have not all the true ring or composition. "O holy simplicity!" exclaimed Huss, when he saw an aged devout woman throwing a fagot on to his burning pile. But our safeguard is not a holy simplicity, believing all that we have been told by good men; it is rather, in dependence on the direction of God, the exercise of an independent judgment. That is the sheet-anchor of our Protestantism. We reject the claim of the Roman Catholic that we are to accept of things because they are taught by the Church, because they have been ordained by councils, because they have even the support of the apostolic Fathers. The thing to be deplored is that much of our Protestantism is traditional, an unreasoning acceptance of belief. With regard to opinions which pass current in society, we are not to accept of them because they are popular, because they are well-sounding, because they are associated with particular names or parties; but we are to have a Divine insight into them as true or false. With regard to what is presented for the regulation of our conduct, there is evil as well as good presented for our acceptance. And evil is not presented to us as evil; it takes specious forms—even Satan puts on the garb of an angel of light. We have need, therefore, to be on our guard; we have need to have our senses exercised to discern good and evil. Let us inquire, regarding an action or course of action, whether it is fitted to yield not simply a present but a solid and lasting satisfaction, without regrets in the future; whether it is according to right principle and conducive to strength of character, and fitted also to be beneficial to others. "If we discerned ourselves," says the apostle, "we should not be judged." Let us be just with ourselves, that we may escape the consequences of a false judgment. Let us impartially apply the tests now, as those to whom they are to be impartially and convincingly applied at the day of judgment.

XII. DUTY IN VIEW OF THE RESULT OF PROVING ALL THINGS. 1. *On the one hand to hold fast the good.* "Hold fast that which is good." It is implied that we are not to be always proving. As a result of our proving, we find out that which is good. It is a duty we owe to that which is good to hold it fast, and not to let it go. If we have found the Bible to be the Word of God, let us hold it fast. Let us take it as nutriment to our souls. Let it be the test by which we try things. "To the Law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." If we have satisfied ourselves as to the claims of Christ as our Divine teacher, let us hold him fast; let us take his teachings into our being, and let the confessing of Christ be that by which we try the spirits, not persons, but rather the spirit by which individuals, communities, institutes, systems, are animated. If we have satisfied ourselves that Christ has made full atonement for our sin, let us hold that truth fast as central, let us take all the comfort there is in it, and let it be the test of loyalty to Christ. If we have found out what a good life is as commended and exemplified by Christ, and as put to the proof by ourselves, let us hold it fast as what has held us up in the past, as what has held up the good in all the generations, as what will hold us up until we obtain an immutable standing in heaven. And let us not, with a false toleration, think that any life can be good which wants the great theistic, and especially the great Christian, elements. 2. *On the other hand to abstain from evil.* "Abstain from every form of evil." The old translation is indefensible here. The words should not have formed a verse by themselves; they should have been added on to the former words. In view of the good and evil that are separated in the proving of things, we are on the one hand to hold fast that which is good, and on the other hand to abstain from every form of evil. If anything is yet undetermined to our mind, our duty as already laid down is to find out its true nature. If, after examination, it is of a doubtful nature, or seems to be bordering on evil, our duty certainly is to abstain from it. But the duty laid down here is different from that. It is our duty with regard to what we have found out to be one of the many forms of evil. Having found it out to be evil in reality, let us not hesitate about our course, let us abstain from it, let us refuse to taste it even as we would not take poison, let us turn away from it as from that which is alien from our being and fitted only to work our destruction.—R. F.

Vers. 23—28.—*Prayer.* I. PRAYER FOR THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE THESSALONIANS. "And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your

spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." From the object of the prayer God is here named the God of peace. The peace which takes away the discord of our nature and restores its harmony is his will and gift. But he is only the God of peace to us in our sanctification. The apostle had been exhorting to various forms of holiness. Feeling, however, how feeble his part was in their sanctification, he makes his appeal to the first Cause of Sanctification. "The God of peace himself sanctify you." In sanctification there is the idea of being set apart to the service of God. In the prayer the stress is laid on the *wholeness* of the sanctification. In the word translated "wholly" there is the idea of wholeness in the way of the end being reached. The materials of the temple-building and vessels were originally in a rough state. But, put into the hands of cunning workmen, they were brought up into apt and consistent and beautiful forms. And not without sprinkling of blood were they dedicated to God. So the stuff of which we are made is originally in an unpolished, defiled condition; but, in the hands of the great Artificer, through the efficacy of the blood of Christ, are we being brought up into a state in which, in our whole being, we shall be fit for being employed in the service of God. In the second part of the prayer there is brought in another aspect of the wholeness of sanctification. And the word which indicates it is brought forward in the original out of its natural position, so as to be separated from the similar word translated "wholly" only by "and." It conveys the idea of being whole in the way of being entire in its parts. "It means what represents the whole undivided possession, what is not weakened by division, and thus subsists in perfect integrity" (Delitzsch). The integrity refers to the three parts into which our nature is here regarded as divided—spirit and soul and body. In some places Scripture language turns upon the distinction between the material and immaterial nature of man. Here the immaterial nature is divided into spirit and soul. And this is in keeping with the dividing asunder of soul and spirit in Heb. iv. 12, and also with the contrast between the present psychical body and the future spiritual body in 1 Cor. xv. "Whilst the soul," says Olshausen, who has made a special study of this subject, "denotes the lower region of the inner man—comprises, therefore, the powers to which analogous ones are found in *animal* life also, as understanding, appetitive faculty, memory, fancy—the spirit includes those natural dispositions which constitute the true *human* life; viz. reason, as the faculty of perceiving the Divine; conscience, as the faculty of distinguishing moral good and evil; free-will, as the faculty of moral choice, by which the ability to form a history is purchased." The spirit, we may say, is that by which we have the power of knowing and serving God, and of making character, and in which, in its whole range, we are separated from the brutes. The soul is the lower part of the inner man, in which, in its judgments, and longings, and recollections, and imaginings, the spirit is designed to bear rule. The body, or outer man, which is quickened by the soul, and has the power of exciting the soul, is another sphere in which, in its appetites and powers, the spirit is designed to bear rule through the soul. The spirit is wholly sanctified in the sense intended when, through the possession of the Spirit of God, reason and conscience faithfully represent the Divine voice, and the will is faithfully responsive; when, as a whole, it is the ruling centre with reference to the rest of the nature. The soul is wholly sanctified when the understanding is used as a help to the keeping of Divine precepts; when the desires and affections are divinely regulated and purified and tempered; when there is a ready memory for the Word of God, and a readiness from past associations in calling up good thoughts; when the imagination is filled with Christ and the Christian ideal and the Christian prospect; when, as a whole, this part of our nature does not assert its independence of the spirit above, and can resist the charms of the senses below. The body is wholly sanctified when its various members are used as instruments of righteousness; when, as a whole, it does not aspire to rule in the soul; when it takes its law from pure judgments, and desires, and recollections, and imaginings. Such is the wholeness of sanctification in the integrity of the nature. And what, on the positive side, is represented as integrity of nature, on the negative side is represented as being without blame. Here there is a glance forward, as there frequently is in this Epistle, to the coming of Christ. It is then that the integrity of our nature is to be fully realized, and to be placed in inviolable keeping. Beyond that point, the integrity of our nature perfectly attained, no power in the universe can ever break.

II. THE PRAYER GROUNDED IN THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD. "Faithful is he that calleth you, who will also do it." There is a distinct covenanting on the part of God to bring about our sanctification. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and on their heart also will I write them: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." God, in calling, actually begins the covenant work of our sanctification, and an appeal can be made to him as the faithful God, by ourselves or others, to carry out what he has begun. Let us not be backward to remind him of his promise, or to look for it being followed by performance.

CONCLUSION. 1. *Request for prayer.* "Brethren, pray for us." This request for prayer comes from the three Christian workers. They were thrown upon those for whom they laboured, in being themselves also compassed with infirmity. They felt that, if the Divine blessing was to rest upon their work in the highest measure, then the Thessalonian Church must join with the other Churches in giving them the assistance of their prayers. 2. *The holy kiss.* "Salute all the brethren with a holy kiss." This was the common Eastern form of salutation, associated with religion. Apparently the elders were thus to salute the members of the Thessalonian Church, one by one, in the name of Paul and Silas and Timothy. Propriety does not allow with us the use of this form of salutation between the various members of the Christian circle. But there is no reason why there should not be all the good feeling and fellowship with Christ of which the holy kiss is symbolic. At the same time, if love is to be sustained, it must be allowed all suitable forms of manifestation. 3. *Direction as to the public reading of the Epistle.* "I adjure you by the Lord that this Epistle be read unto all the brethren." The direction is given in the most solemn manner. Paul writes in his own name, and adjures by the Lord. The adjuration was apparently founded on the importance of the Epistle, not merely to the elders to whom it was handed, but to the whole community. Let it be brought *directly* to bear upon all, that they may each for themselves have their impression of its contents. Such an adjuration in the first of Paul's Epistles significantly points to the right of every Christian member to have direct access to the Word of God. "What Paul," says Bengel, "commands with an adjuration, Rome prohibits with an anathema." 4. *Benediction.* "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you." He ends his Epistle as he began, by imploring grace. It is to the ever-living Divine Head of the Church that we must look for the bestowal of the blessing, and not according to the merit of any for whom we implore it, but only according to the abundance of the merit that he has obtained for them.—R. F.

Vers. 2—4.—*A thief in the night.* The one idea to be impressed upon us by this striking image is that of unexpectedness. The thief succeeds in making his entrance when he is least expected. So will it be on "the day of the Lord." The idea is derived from the teaching of Christ, in which it is more fully expanded (see Matt. xxiv. 43, 44). The "day of the Lord" which is to come thus suddenly is often referred to in the Old Testament. There it is a dreadful occasion of Divine manifestation for judgment, to be hailed with gladness when the judgment falls on the enemies of Israel and brings the chosen people deliverance, but to be regarded with terror by sinful Israelites (Amos v. 18). St. Paul regards it as the day of Christ's second advent. But the general use of the expression in the Old Testament justifies us in applying the warning concerning it to various forms of the *parousia*.

I. THE DAY OF THE LORD WILL COME UPON THE BENIGHTED AS A THIEF. 1. *The day is unexpected.* What did the heathen fellow-citizens of the Thessalonians know, or think, or care about the glorious advent of Christ, with its angel-summons and its trumpet-blast for which the Christians were watching so eagerly? The Jews did not expect the coming of the Son of man in the destruction of Jerusalem. The world does not think of the great judgment-day. Worldly people do not contemplate death. 2. *No signs are given to the world of the dawning of this dread day.* No lurid twilight betokens the tempestuous morning. It bursts suddenly upon a world slumbering in darkness. Science, philosophy, ordinary signs of the times, give no hint of it to the unspiritual. The biblical arithmetic of our modern prophets is always proving itself at fault. No bare intellectual calculation will ever discover the "day of the Lord." 3. *It is best for the world that no natural signs should herald this day.* (1) Christian people are better

without the common signs which could be discerned by ordinary observation. To possess them would be to walk by sight. They are not given in order that faith may be exercised. (2) The world at large is better without these signs. They would disarrange all the necessary pursuits of life. Some would cry abjectly for mercy without really repenting at heart. Some, as when plagues raged in cities, would fling off all restraints and plunge into a reckless course of debauchery. Some would coldly calculate the time allowed for sinning before they would need to bethink them of preparing for the end.

II. THE DAY OF THE LORD WILL NOT COME UPON THE ENLIGHTENED AS A THIEF. St. Paul makes an important distinction here—one that is not always recognized: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." 1. *No men are enlightened as to the date of the second advent.* Even Christ did not know it. This he distinctly says (Mark xiii. 32). 2. *Christians are enlightened as to the fact and the character of the second advent.* (1) They know that Christ will come again, which is more than the unbelieving world knows. They have Christ's own promise to rely upon (Matt. xxiv. 30). (2) They know that Christ will come unexpectedly. At least, they ought to know this if they read the teachings of Scripture on the subject. 3. *The enlightenment of Christians will prevent the second advent from coming upon them like a thief.* When we are prepared for a surprise, it is no longer a surprise. If we know a thing may happen at any time, its occurrence will not give us the shock of an unexpected event. Christ, longed for, eagerly desired, fondly expected, will come at an hour when his people know not, but not when his true disciples are unprepared to welcome him.—W. F. A.

Vers. 6—8.—*Night and day.* St. Paul writes of two classes of people whose conditions correspond respectively to night and day. Many associations of gloom and evil and ignorance gather round the image of night, while their opposites—brightness, goodness, knowledge, etc.—are suggested by the idea of day. One advantage of the metaphorical language of Scripture is that it gives to us richer and more suggestive ideas than could be conveyed by bare abstract phrases. Subsidiary notions, like chromatic chords in music, give tone and richness to the main idea impressed upon us by a manifold and significant image. This is apparent with the use of the images light and darkness by St. John. St. Paul would have us think that the unspiritual and godless world is in general like a people of the night, while the Church is like a city of light. But probably the enlightenment of revelation, the daylight of spiritual knowledge, is the prominent thought in the mind of the apostle. For we find that in previous verses he has been referring to the shock of surprise to the world which will not be shared by enlightened Christians. On the fact of their greater enlightenment he now founds an exhortation to conduct worthy of it. The fuller light demands the holier life. Sons of the day have not the excuses of children of night.

I. THE CHILDREN OF THE NIGHT. 1. These are *in darkness*. The darkness is not confined to the illiterate. Nor is it confined to the inhabitants of heathen lands. People in Christian countries, who are familiar with the language of the New Testament, may be totally ignorant of its spiritual thought. Such people, though they sit in university chairs as professors of divinity, are blinded with midnight blackness. Was not Faust in the night? 2. Some of the children of the night *sleep*. These are the thoughtless and careless. They may be awake to secular business. But they slumber over moral and spiritual subjects. If they think of them at all it is with dreamy unconcern. 3. Others of the children of the night are *awake only to evil*. They spend the night in drunkenness. They hide shameful practices under the cloak of darkness. 4. The guilt of the children of the night is mitigated just in proportion as their *benighting is not wilful*. If it arises from their unhappy circumstances, these unfortunate people cannot be condemned to the same doom as that of men who sin with their eyes open, or as that of those who wilfully put out their eyes because they love darkness.

II. THE SONS OF THE DAY. 1. These are *enlightened*. They may not be brilliantly intellectual nor highly educated. They may be illiterate in human lore. But the "eyes of their hearts" (Eph. i. 18) are opened. By faith and love and obedience they have come to know what God has revealed through his Spirit. 2. Sons of the day are expected to be *wakeful*. It is natural to sleep in the night. Sleep in the day betokens

sinful indolence. The indifference of spiritually ignorant people is natural. That of Christians on whom has risen "the Dayspring from on high" is monstrous. 3. Sons of the day are expected to be *sober*. It is bad enough to be drunken in the night, but a debauch which is not shamed by the light of day proves itself to be scandalously depraved. There are excesses of passion, of self-will, and of worldly excitement which Christian people who have escaped the coarser sins fall into. These are not excusable in the children of the night, but they are much less excusable in the sons of the day. Sobriety becomes the enlightened Christian. This sobriety need not consist in Puritan rigour; much less should it partake of sourness, gloom, or prim formality. The sober Christian should remember that the typical citizen of the kingdom of heaven is a little child. Sobriety is just the opposite to unrestrained passionateness of pleasure or anger. 4. Sons of the day are provided with *armour*. The three graces—faith, hope, and love—constitute the armour of the Christian. They protect the two most vital parts—breast and head. Faith and love come together, for they interact. Faith working by love protects the heart. Hope, the hope of final deliverance from trial and temptation, is the helmet, because it protects the head by keeping the thoughts clear and calm. —W. F. A.

Vers. 9, 10.—*The Divine appointment of Christians.* To some it may seem superfluous that a Christian apostle, writing to the members of a Christian Church, should say, "God appointed us not unto wrath." But the import of this declaration is made apparent by what precedes. St. Paul has been contrasting the condition of the sons of light with that of the children of darkness. Among the latter are to be found all degrees of that conduct which hides under the cloak of night—from the carelessness that sleeps, down to the debauchery that is awake only to cause its own shame. Such things must bring wrath in "the day of the Lord" (ver. 2). But Christians are called to quite another life. They are not destined to wrath. Let them, therefore, not behave as the sons of the night, but in a way that is worthy of their call to salvation, with sobriety and confidence, strong in faith and love, and rejoicing in hope (ver. 8).

I. THE DIVINE APPOINTMENT TO SALVATION. 1. *It springs from an august Source.* God appoints to salvation. He has a hand in our destinies. We are not left to discover a way of escape from ruin for ourselves. God has interfered for our deliverance. 2. *It is determined by a firm ordinance.* God "appointed." This word signifies prevision, arrangement, definite order. Redemption is not an irregular makeshift brought about by a hasty after-thought. It enters into the calm, eternal thoughts of God, and takes its place in the orderly disposition of the Divine government. 3. *It aims at securing a large result.* When God makes bare his arm and settles a solemn appointment, this must be for some adequate result. The object must be large to justify so large an action. Here it is nothing less than perfect deliverance from the ruin of sin. Salvation is not a technical phrase. It is too big a word to be defined by a theological sentence. It is deliverance all round—from root and fruit of evil, from wrath of justice, from penalty of law, from tyranny of Satan, from vice of heart, from judgment without, from corruption within. 4. *It is to be personally accepted.* We are appointed to "the obtaining of salvation;" for (1) though ordained by God, it is not enjoyed by us until we have personal experience of it; (2) this personal acceptance depends on our own will and act; (3) the full consequences of the Divine ordinance of salvation are still future.

II. THE METHOD OF ACCOMPLISHING THIS DIVINE APPOINTMENT. 1. *It is secured by the mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Thus it is to be obtained "through" him, which means (1) that the salvation itself is brought about by the action of Christ; and (2) that it becomes ours when we are united to Christ. Now each of these points has its own distinct position in the great work. Too often they are confused together. It is not necessary for us to comprehend all that Christ does. Our part is to see that we are united to him. He will do his part whether we understand it or not. 2. *It involved the death of Christ for us.* So much we know as a fact, whatever theory we may have as to the bearings of the crucifixion upon the process of redemption. And it is the great fact which is of supreme importance to us. It is unfortunate that abstract propositions concerning the theological aspects of it should confuse our vision of the simple, touching statement, "He died for us."

III. THE END FOR WHICH THIS DIVINE APPOINTMENT IS MADE. 1. *This is that we may live in fellowship with Christ.* Strictly speaking, the fellowship with Christ is given as the object of the suffering of death by Christ. But the earlier part of the passage shows us the Divine appointment of salvation as secured through Christ. Putting the two together, we see that salvation is worthless without the life in Christ, as well as that salvation is only possible to those who are in fellowship with Christ. Salvation is in itself a negative term. Bare deliverance is of little use unless some good is to be made of the liberty and immunity. While a fellow-creature is being saved from death by drowning we follow the process with intense interest; but after his deliverance we may not feel much concern with his future career. It may be that he will make but a poor use of his restored life. If we finished the story we might find the issue to be a pitiable anti-climax. God is guarding his great appointment from a similar catastrophe. They who are saved live in fellowship with Christ. Such a life is worth securing at the greatest cost. 2. *This fellowship with Christ is independent of the greatest outward changes.* It remains whether we wake or sleep, *i.e.* whether we live or die.—W. F. A.

Vers. 16—18.—*Three universal exhortations.* The striking feature of these three exhortations is their universality. It is natural that we should sometimes pray and rejoice and give thanks. But certainly it does not come naturally to us to be always doing these three things. Nearly all men experience them at some time in their lives. Universality and continuance are to be the distinguishing characteristics of Christians in regard to them. It is, says St. Paul, "the will of God in Christ Jesus to you-ward" that these remarkable signs of grace should be seen in Christian people.

I. PERPETUAL REJOICING. Christians are, of course, subject to natural fluctuations of mood and feeling. They are also liable to the changes of fortune; and they are not callous to the perception of them. None of us can escape sorrow. Some good people have the greatest troubles. The only perfect Man who ever lived was "a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." How, then, can we rejoice always? St. Paul was too real and too sympathetic to mock the sorrowing with the glib words of cheer that shallow comforters administer. If he exhorted, he knew that the exhortation was practicable. 1. *Christian rejoicing is a deep, calm joy.* The surface may be ruffled while the depths are still; cross-currents may vary while the undercurrent runs steadily on. Surface pain may conceal sacred joys which it cannot destroy. 2. *The secret of Christian joy is inwardness.* These Christians do not depend on external circumstances for their happiness. The spiritual sources of rejoicing in the love and presence of God are not disturbed by earthly calamities. Often they give forth sweetest blessedness under the blows of affliction, as the waters flowed out when Moses struck the rock. If we want to rejoice always we must live always near to God. The first exhortation is closely connected with the second. 3. Christians are also helped to rejoice always by *living in the future* (2 Cor. iv. 17, 18).

II. CEASELESS PRAYING. It is needless to say that this does not mean that we are to be always on our knees. That is not possible; nor would it be right, for the work of life must be done. We are not only worshippers; we are servants. 1. *Ceaseless praying is a continuous direction of the heart towards God.* The essence of prayer is not the uttering of devout phrases. God does not hear us for our much speaking. Christ condemned long prayers, not because we could pray too much, but because they became superstitious as though a worth lay in their length, and also because they became formal when the spirit flagged. Prayer is essentially spiritual communion with God. This must be supported, however, and inspired by definite seasons wholly given to devotion. People often abuse the motto, *Laborare est orare*. It is only true of the prayerful man. 2. *Ceaseless praying is attainable through the enjoyment of unbroken union with God.* Our thought may not be always occupied with God because the duties of life demand our attention, and its recreations are requisite for our health. But if we live near to God we shall have an abiding sense of God's nearness, a quick uplifting of the heart to him in quiet moments, and many a secret talk with him even in our busiest hours.

III. UNIVERSAL THANKSGIVING. The difficulty is to make this honest. For it is an insult to God to utter words of thanksgiving while the heart is ungrateful. How can we thank God for pain, for loss, for things the good of which we cannot discover? 1.

Universal thanksgiving is possible through the perception that under all circumstances blessings outnumber and outweigh troubles. We fix our thoughts on our trouble to the neglect of a thousand blessings. A fairer, wider consideration would call up more grateful thoughts. 2. Universal thanksgiving is possible by means of faith that holds troubles sent by God to be blessings in disguise. A mere consideration of the facts of life will not create it. But when we have come to believe that "the mercy of the Lord endureth for ever," we have learnt the secret of universal thankfulness.—W. F. A.

Ver. 19.—*Quenching the Spirit.* This verse is often misread. The context shows that it does not refer to the resistance of the sinner to the striving of the Holy Spirit in his heart. For the words immediately following, "despise not prophesyings," indicate its reference to the work of the Spirit in inspiring utterances in the Church. Some prosaic, cautious people were inclined to check these enthusiastic utterances. Perhaps there were foolish would-be prophets who were making themselves and the Church ridiculous by their predictions about the second coming of Christ, a subject in which the Church at Thessalonica was then deeply interested. St. Paul does not wish his readers to accept all that is offered to them, for he says, "Prove all things." But he fears lest, in the rejection of imposture, pretence, illusion, and misguided fanaticism, genuine teachings of the Divine Spirit should be discarded. Therefore he warns his readers against the danger of quenching the Spirit.

I. THERE IS A FIRE OF THE SPIRIT. It is fire that is not to be quenched. In Old Testament times a prophet was fitted for his mission by having a live coal from off the altar laid upon his lips (Isa. vi. 6). Christ, who came to baptize with the Holy Ghost, came also to baptize with fire. The Spirit descended on the day of Pentecost under the form of tongues of flame. God's Spirit deepens feeling, kindles enthusiasm, rouses sacred passion, sets the soul aflame with love. He who has not felt the fire knows not some of the strongest working of the Spirit, as the psalmist knew it when he said, "While I was musing the fire burned" (Ps. xxxix. 3).

II. THERE IS A DANGER LEST WE SHOULD QUENCH THE SPIRIT. 1. *In our own hearts.* If we check our more generous emotions, and harden ourselves with maxims of the world, and so immerse ourselves in grinding business cares that we have no thought or heart left for spiritual feelings, we shall quench the Spirit in ourselves. For us there will be no revelation. To us heaven will be black as midnight, silent as the grave. No warmth of devotion nor flash of spiritual perception will brighten up the dull and dreary chambers of our souls. 2. *In others.* Beware of checking young enthusiasm. It may err; but it had better err than die. Middle-aged common sense may not understand it. But this may not be the fault of young enthusiasm. It may result from the deadened perceptions of an unsympathizing mind. If we cannot follow, at least let us not check an inspiration which may be too high for our low sunken lives. 3. *In Scripture.* Absolutely, of course, we cannot quench the Spirit in Scripture. The Book remains, whatever we may think of it. But to ourselves we may quench the Spirit. A dry, hard critical examination of the Bible, ignoring all devotional, practical, and spiritual uses of it, will rob it of all inspiration for the reader. With some the fires are burnt out; they only grope among the ashes, and cannot find a lingering spark. To such people the Bible is the most dreary book in the world. In order that the fire of inspiration should touch us, the fire of love and faith must be kept alive on the altar of our hearts.—W. F. A.

Ver. 21.—*Private judgment.* This verse should be read in connection with the preceding passage. There we find a caution against quenching the Spirit and despising prophesyings by a narrow, cold, or prejudiced refusal to listen to the utterances of our fellow-Christians. Here we have a warning in the other direction, that we may guard against accepting every saying which professes to be the outcome of spiritual influences. We must try the spirits and accept each only as its claim is proven. But the universal character of the verse before us gives it a more general application to all teaching.

I. ST. PAUL RECOGNIZES THE RIGHT AND DUTY OF PRIVATE JUDGEMENT. This fundamental principle of Protestantism is Pauline. The apostle is not writing to doctors of divinity or authorized teachers; he is addressing the whole Church (see ch. i. 1). To the general congregation of Christians he says, "Prove all things." The advice was in

accordance with his own practice. He speaks of himself and his colleagues—"by the manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (2 Cor. iv. 2). Contrast the Koran with the New Testament. Mohammed dogmatizes; St. Paul reasons. We cannot shelter ourselves in error under the *ægis* of high authority. St. Paul abandoned with contempt the errors which he cultivated while he sat at the feet of Gamaliel. It is our duty as well as our right to have independent personal convictions.

II. THE REQUIREMENT OF INQUIRY IS UNIVERSAL. "All things." We must take nothing for granted. Some of the surest convictions of one age are absolutely repudiated by another age. This statement becomes softened in practice by the ease and unconsciousness with which many things may be proved to us. We have not to carry on elaborate, original inquiries to establish every point of our belief. There are beliefs which are best proved without any such inquiry. But all must be proved. The reason is twofold. 1. *Many specious delusions threaten to deceive us.* There have been false prophets flattering the people with smooth words since the days of Jeremiah's opponents. Truth and error are mixed. Forged coins closely resemble good sovereigns. Care must be taken to sift the chaff from the wheat. 2. *Truth is most valuable to us when we have tested and proved it for ourselves.* Then we understand it most clearly, believe it most heartily, and value it most highly. The few islands of truth for which a man has laboured and fought through seas of difficulty are more precious to him than vast continents of truth which he inherits at second hand.

III. THE METHOD OF INQUIRY MUST BE EXPERIMENTAL. This is implied by the word "prove," which means test, and is used of the assaying of precious metals. High *à priori* argument is a dangerous guide. The more tedious and less pretentious methods of observation and experiment are safer. To this method Christ referred when, speaking of the various teachers who should arise, he said, "By their fruits ye shall know them." This does not mean that we are to taste the fruits, *i.e.* to adopt every system in order to discover its merits. We can observe its working in others. Therefore the first requisite in regard to any new teaching is patience. Give it time to reveal itself by its fruits, and do not pass a hasty judgment upon it. If you do not wait for the harvest, you may cut out wheat with tares. Next, careful inquiry is to be made; ideas and their fruits are to be tested. But two cautions should be borne in mind. 1. *The experience and testimony of other people is evidence.* We may not accept what any say simply on the authority of their official position. We who do not believe in the Pope of Rome would be very foolish if we adopted a little private pope of our own creation. But the authority of knowledge, experience, and ability is weight in evidence. 2. *We must not assume that nothing is true but what we can prove.* To do this is to dethrone the pope only to set up our own infallibility.

IV. THE END OF INQUIRY IS TO DISCOVER AND TO HOLD TO WHAT IS GOOD. It is not reasonable, nor happy, nor healthy to live in a permanent condition of unsettled conviction. It is useless to inquire at all if our inquiry is not to lead us to some decisive issue. When we have arrived at a truth, we need not repeat the process of seeking for it over and over again. Having proved certain things to be good, we may rest satisfied with the result—always preserving an open mind for new light, for it is a great mistake to confound an open mind with an empty mind. 1. *The result of inquiry should be to discover what is good.* The good is more important than the beautiful, the pleasant, the convenient, the striking, and the novel. 2. *When the good is discovered it should be held firmly.* Then the seeker after light is to become the guardian and champion of truth.—W. F. A.

Ver. 23.—*Complete sanctification.* In concluding his Epistle, and finishing his list of practical exhortations, St. Paul sums up his desires for the welfare of his readers by one comprehensive prayer for their complete sanctification.

I. CONSIDER THE NATURE OF SANCTIFICATION. The sanctification of a man makes a sanctuary of him. It consecrates him to the service and for the presence of God. It includes two things, the second of which is essential to the first. 1. *Dedication.* The sanctified man is dedicated to God. He yields himself up to the will of God. He is ready for any use to which God may put him. He lives to glorify God. 2. *Purification.* We have come to regard this as essentially the same as sanctification.

It is not so, for Christ was sanctified (John xvii. 19), and he never needed to be purified. But the great hindrance to our consecration of ourselves to God or to any special Divine purpose, is sin. Therefore for us the one great preliminary is purification.

II. OBSERVE THE SCOPE OF SANCTIFICATION. It is to be complete: 1. *In range*. It affects spirit, soul, and body—St. Paul's human trinity. (1) *Spirit*. Our highest thoughts, aspirations, and efforts are to be sound, pure, and devoted to God. (2) *Soul*. Our lower capacities of feeling and acting in our natural human life are to be equally sanctified. We cannot have a devout spirituality side by side with a carnal natural imagination. Moreover, our natural humanity, in its lower perceptions and energies, should be used for the service of God. (3) *Body*. This is not only not to be degraded by vicious appetite, but to be used as an instrument for God's service. It is unchristian to mutilate or weaken the body. This should be kept sound and healthy and vigorous for our Master's use. 2. *In intensity*. The sanctification is to be thorough. Each part of our nature is to be "wholly" sanctified. "We must not dedicate ourselves to God half-heartedly. He requires the whole surrender of our whole nature.

III. NOTE THE SOURCE OF SANCTIFICATION. It is in God. St. Paul turns from exhortation to prayer. Here and there little duties are directed by our own will and energy. But the grand work of complete purification and consecration must be God's. 1. *By means of his spiritual influence*. He sanctifies by breathing into us his Holy Spirit. Contact with God burns out sin, and lifts the soul into an atmosphere of holiness. 2. *By means of his providential care*. St. Paul prays that God will keep his readers "entire"—as we read in the Revised Version. He guards from too great temptation.

IV. LOOK AT THE END OF SANCTIFICATION. This is to be "blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1. *Preparation for the second advent*. We are required to be ready to meet Christ. The glad expectation should encourage every effort to prepare, lest we should be like the foolish virgins. 2. *Blamelessness*. Christ comes as Judge. How sad, after longing to see him, to meet, instead of a welcome from our Lord, only stern words of rebuke!—W. F. A.

Ver. 24.—*God's faithfulness*. Between the Divine call to salvation and the full accomplishment of salvation, the Christian needs faith to watch and wait, to work and walk through the darkness. The rock on which he must build this faith is God's faithfulness.

I. CHARACTERISTICS OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS. 1. *God performs what he promises*. God promises in his Word. He promises most solemnly, and as it were by oath, in his covenants, e.g. with Noah, with Abraham, with Moses and Israel, and the new covenant sealed by the blood of Christ. God also promises by his actions. Natural instincts, such as the innate thirst for light, the yearning for immortality, etc., are the Creator's promises written on the very being of his creatures. God's faithfulness means that he will not belie these promises. 2. *God is true to himself*. His consistency and immutability are the grounds of his faithfulness. Because he is true to himself he will be true to us: "The mercy of the Lord endureth for ever." If we are left to "the uncovenanted mercies" of God, these are large and sure enough to dispel all fear. 3. *God justifies the confidence of his children*. Faithfulness implies trustworthiness. If we commit our souls to God as to a faithful Creator, he accepts our trust, and thereby pledges his honour not to desert us.

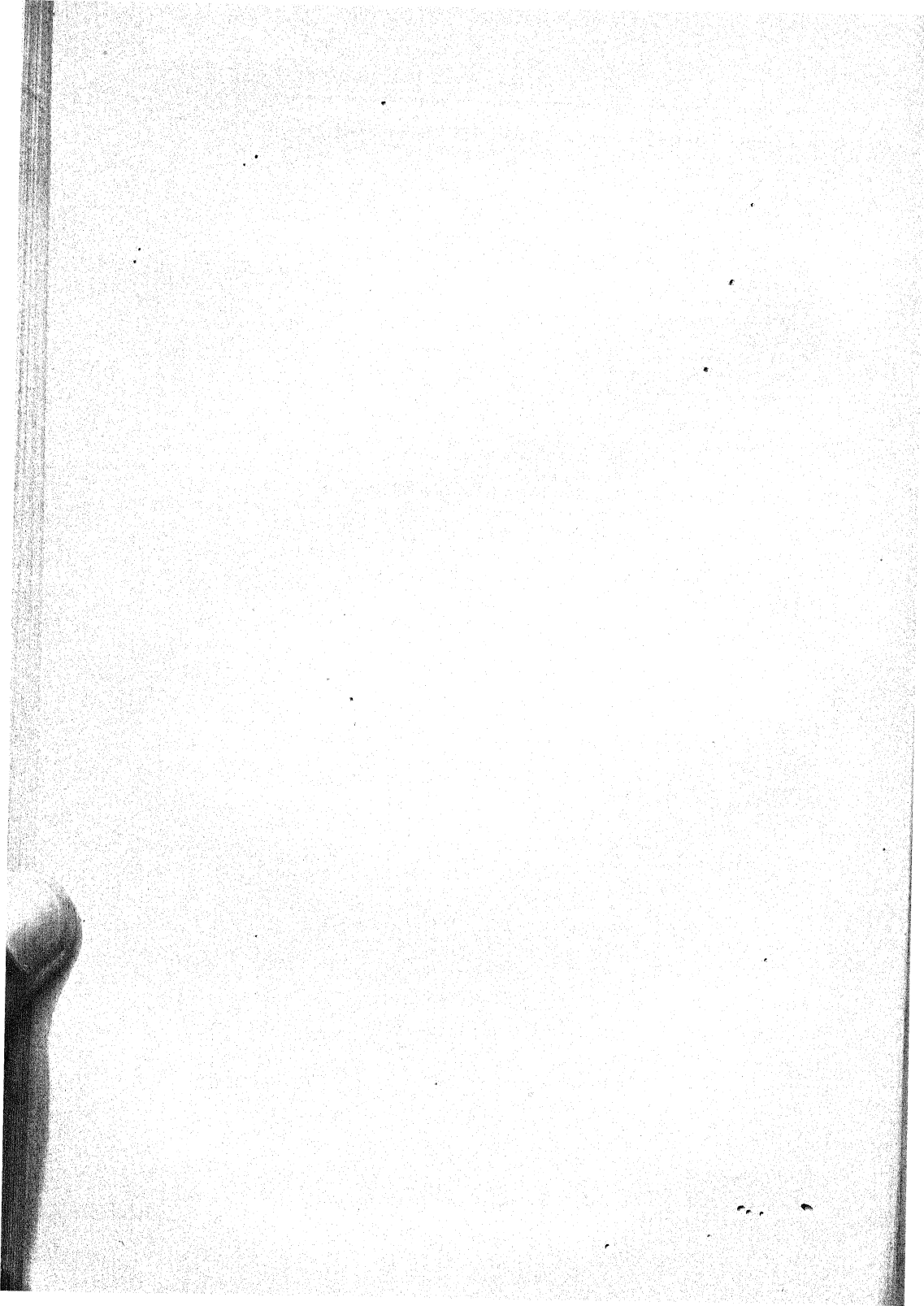
II. GROUNDS FOR BELIEVING IN GOD'S FAITHFULNESS. 1. *Our knowledge of the nature of God*. If we believe in God at all, we must believe in him as moral, good, nay, perfect. A weak and limited being may change and fail. God is too great to be faithless. 2. *The testimony of those who can best speak for God*. We judge of a person's character largely on the evidence of those who have the most intimate acquaintance. Now we find prophets and saints who are nearest to God in thought and life most positive in asserting his faithfulness. Only they who dwell in the outer courts of his temple, or altogether away from his presence, venture to deny it. 3. *The evidence afforded by the life of Christ*. Christ was the great Revealer of the character of God; and Christ was faithful even to death. 4. *The witness of history to the past faithfulness of God*;

e.g. the deliverance from Egypt, the return from the captivity, the advent of Christ, the presence of Christ in his Church to guide and strengthen and bless. 5. *The confirmation of personal experience.* Many have proved God's faithfulness in their own lives. They can say, "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles."

III. TEMPTATIONS TO DOUBT GOD'S FAITHFULNESS. 1. *The weary time of waiting.* God does not fulfil his promises as soon as he makes them. Long intervals try our faith. So was it with the Jewish expectation of the Messiah; so is it with the Christian expectation of the second advent. The heart is sickened with hope deferred. But this doubt is as foolish as that of one who, seeing the morning to be long in coming, begins to distrust the promise of sunrise. 2. *Appearances of unfaithfulness.* Nothing tries love so painfully as the necessity of so acting as to provoke doubts of its own constancy. Yet the truest love will not shrink from this necessity when it arises. God seems to desert us, or he visits us in chastisement. It is his greater faithfulness that leads him so to act as to cloud our vision of his love. 3. *The unexpected fulfilment of Divine promises.* God does not always fulfil his promises in the way expected by us. Then we are disappointed. But the error was in our previous delusion, not in any change on God's part. Moreover, the true Divine fulfilment, though at first less pleasing to us than our expectation of it, always proves in the long run to be far better.

IV. THE RESPONSE WHICH GOD'S FAITHFULNESS SHOULD CALL FORTH FROM US.

1. *Adoration.* The faithfulness of God is one of the most worthy themes of worship. 2. *Trust.* Faithfulness merits confidence, and it encourages it. 3. *Fidelity.* If God is faithful to us, he has a right to bid us be faithful.—W. F. A.



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ST. PAUL TO THE THESSALONIAN

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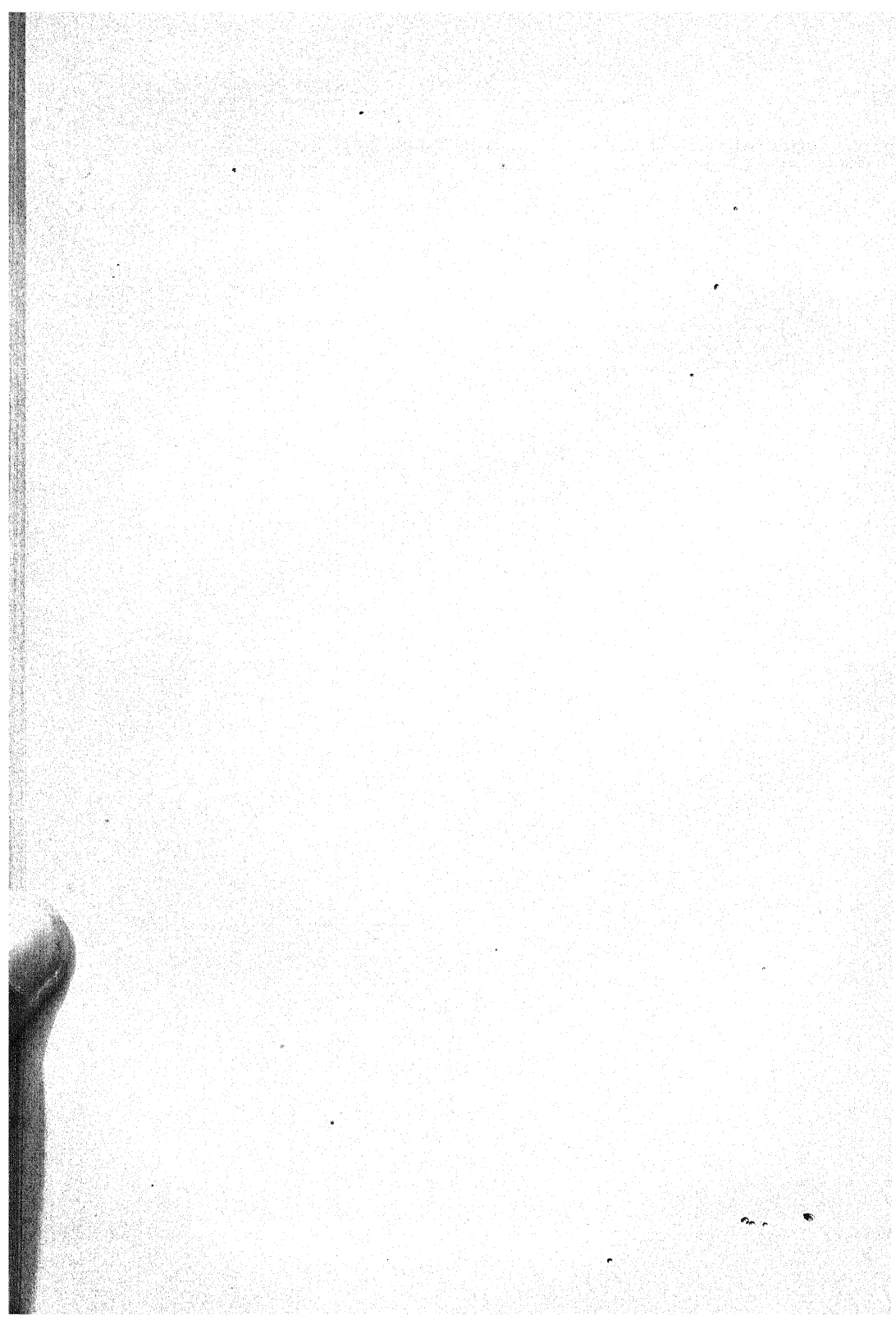
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THE
PULPIT COMMENTARY,

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II. THESSALONIANS.

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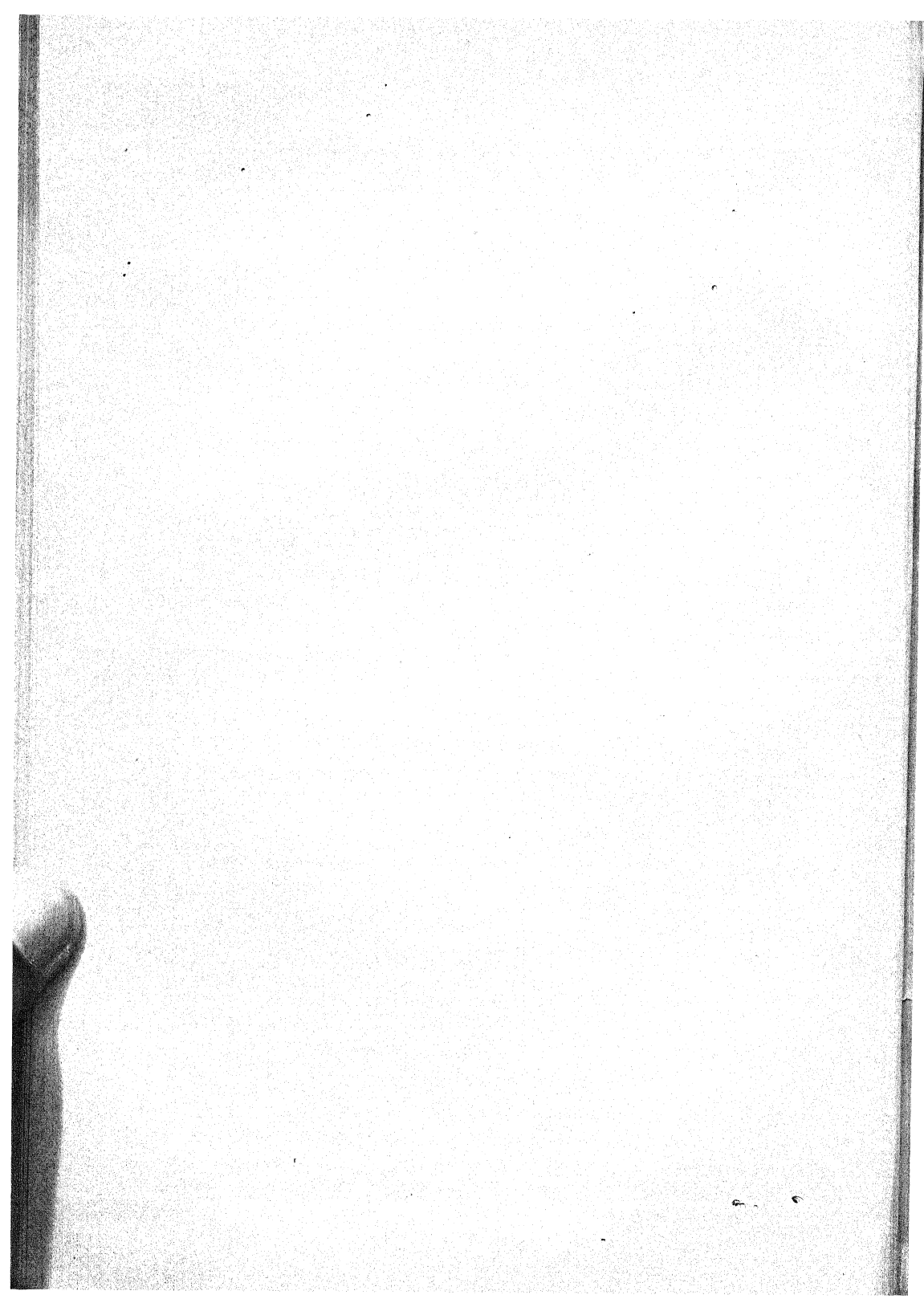
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THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS.

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE EPISTLE.

THE external evidence in favour of the authenticity of the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians is even stronger than that in favour of the First Epistle. In consequence of the prediction of the "man of sin," contained in the second chapter, which prediction made a great impression on the early Church, it is more frequently referred to and quoted by the Christian Fathers. The testimonies of Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Clemens of Alexandria, and Tertullian may all be appealed to. Justin Martyr (A.D. 140) unquestionably alludes to this Epistle when he says, "When also the man of apostasy, who speaketh great things against the Most High, shall dare to commit unlawful deeds against us Christians" ('Dial. cum Tryph.,' c. 110). And the following direct quotations are found in the writings of Irenæus (A.D. 178): "And again in the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, speaking of antichrist, Paul says, 'And then shall that wicked one be revealed whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the presence of his coming' (ch. ii. 8)" ('Adv. Hæres.,' iii. 7, 2). And again: "Concerning whom the apostle in the Epistle which is the Second to the Thessalonians thus speaks: 'Except a falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition: who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped' (ch. ii. 3, 4)" ('Adv. Hæres.,' v. 25. 1).

Nor is the internal evidence by any means deficient. The character of Paul is impressed upon this Epistle; his lively sympathy with his converts, his gratitude to God for the increase of their faith and love, his joy in their spiritual welfare, his tenderness when censuring them, his assertion of his apostolic authority, his reference to his former instructions, his request for an interest in their prayers,—all these characteristics of the apostle are

found in this Epistle. The style is undoubtedly Pauline. We have the same form of salutation at the beginning and of benediction at the close, the same parallelisms, the same digressions and expansions, the same expressions and peculiarities of diction, which are elsewhere found in Paul's other Epistles.¹ The prophetic portion in the second chapter has indeed been adduced as an evidence of spuriousness. But this objection is partly founded on a mistaken interpretation of the prediction; and although it is admitted that there is here a striking peculiarity, yet this peculiarity relates only to the matter, not to the phraseology, which is undoubtedly Pauline. "The passage in question," observes Dean Alford, "will be found on comparison to bear, in style and flow of sentences, a close resemblance to the denunciatory and prophetic portions of the other Epistles. Compare, for instance, ver. 3 with Col. ii. 8, 16; vers. 8, 9 with 1 Cor. xv. 24—28; ver. 10 with Rom. i. 18, 1 Cor. i. 18, and 2 Cor. ii. 15; ver. 11 with Rom. i. 24, 26; ver. 12 with Rom. ii. 5, 9 and Rom. i. 22."² And although this passage has been much objected to by modern critics, yet hardly any scriptural passage has been more frequently referred to by the early Fathers, and that without any doubt that it formed a part of a genuine Epistle of Paul.

The undesigned coincidences noticed in this Epistle are few and unimportant. The obscurity of the prediction concerning antichrist has been adverted to as a proof of genuineness. No author, it has been remarked, writes unintelligibly on purpose; but it is to be observed that what is almost unintelligible to us was not unintelligible to the Thessalonians. They had a key to the interpretation of the passage in the oral instructions of the apostle given when he was at Thessalonica: "Remember ye not, that, when I was with you, I told you of these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time" (ch. ii. 5, 6).³ In the Epistle Paul observes: "Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable unto any of you" (ch. iii. 8). The apostle here asserts that he received nothing in the way of maintenance from the Thessalonians; and this fact is confirmed by a statement in the Epistle to the Philippians, wherein it is said that his wants in Thessalonica were at least partially supplied by the Philippians: "Now ye Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no Church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again to my necessity" (Phil. iv. 15, 16). And the motive which induced the apostle to decline support from the Thessalonians, namely, to give them an example of honest labour and diligence in work (ch. iii. 9), was the same which actuated him to

¹ See author's 'Pauline Epistles,' p. 108; and also Jowett's 'Epistles of Paul,' vol. i. pp. 140—142, 1st edit.

² Alford's 'Greek Testament,' vol. iii., Prolegomena, p. 55.

³ Paley's 'Horæ Paulinæ,' 2 Thessalonians, No. i.

pursue the same course of conduct at Ephesus (Acts xx. 34, 35). There appears also to be in this Epistle a reference to the First Epistle, where the apostle says, "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or in our Epistle" (ch. ii. 15).

§ 2. THE OCCASION OF THE EPISTLE.

The persons to whom this Epistle was written were "the Church of the Thessalonians" (ch. i. 1), or the Christian converts in the city of Thessalonica. We have already fully discussed this point in the introductory remarks to the First Epistle.

In order to understand this Second Epistle, we must endeavour to ascertain the condition of the Thessalonian Church when the apostle wrote to them. Paul had been compelled to leave the Thessalonians only partially instructed in Christianity; they were defective both in the knowledge of its doctrines and in the practice of its precepts. He had written them an Epistle to correct abuses and to supply what was lacking in their faith (1 Thess. iii. 10). The intelligence brought back to the apostle by the bearer of the First Epistle, or through some other channel, was the occasion of this Epistle. The apostle received a good report of the Thessalonians, and is enabled to express his joy and thankfulness to God that their faith grew exceedingly, and the love of every one toward each other abounded (ch. i. 3). But still the erroneous views concerning the advent, and the consequent disorders to which he had adverted in the First Epistle, had rather increased than diminished. The Lord Jesus Christ had left the world only twenty years before. He had promised to return at an uncertain date, and therefore nothing was more natural than that the Church in general should have expected his immediate return. Various circumstances, both in the Church and in the world, heightened this expectation. Such a view of an immediate advent had taken possession of the minds of the Thessalonian converts. Their anxiety for the loss of their deceased relatives, who, they thought, would lose all the benefits occurring at the advent, had indeed been assuaged by the former Epistle, but the expectation of the immediate advent itself had grown in strength. The Thessalonians, it would seem, from misapprehending some passages of the First Epistle, considered that the day of Christ was at hand (ch. ii. 2). Mistaken and enthusiastic men had also nourished this deception by appealing to visions and to the traditionary sayings of the apostle; and it would even appear that an Epistle had been forged in the name of the apostle. The Church was thrown into a state of wild excitement; an impatient and fanatical longing for the instant when Christ would come seized upon one portion, whilst fear and consternation at the awfulness of the event overwhelmed another. The consequence was that many of the Thessalonians were neglecting their secular business and living idle and useless lives, conceiving that there was no use of working in a world which was so soon

to be destroyed, or of performing the duties belonging to a state of things which was so soon to terminate. Their only duty they felt was to be in readiness for the immediate coming of their Lord.

Accordingly the design of the apostle, in writing this Epistle, was to correct the error which the Thessalonians entertained concerning the immediate advent, and to rectify those abuses to which that error had given rise. The main object of the apostle was to warn the Thessalonians against thinking that the day of the Lord was imminent. The apostle reminds them of his former instructions on this point, and tells them that a series of events—the manifestation and destruction of the man of sin—would intervene. “Now we beseech you concerning the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken from your mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is present” (ch. ii. 1, 2). And, along with this correction of error, was the correction of the disorders occasioned by it. There were among the Thessalonians some who walked disorderly, working not at all; them he enjoined to return to their employments, to do their work with quietness, and to eat the bread of honest labour (ch. iii. 10—12).

With regard to its contents, the Epistle is divided into three parts, nearly corresponding to the three chapters in our version; the first part is eucharistic, the second apocalyptic, and the third practical. The apostle, after saluting the Thessalonians, renders thanks to God for the good report which he had received of them, for the increase of their faith and love, and for their great patience under prolonged persecution; he comforts them under their sufferings by the prospect of rest and recompense at the advent of the Lord Jesus, and prays for their continuance in the faith, and for the glory of Christ's name through their steadfastness and holiness (ch. i.). He then proceeds to the principal object which he had in view—the correction of their error in supposing that the day of Christ was imminent. He admonishes them not to suffer themselves to be led away by excitement as if Christ would immediately appear, he reminds them of his former conversations with them on this subject, and he describes the coming of the man of sin which must precede the coming of Christ (ch. ii. 1—12). He then exhorts them to attend to the admonitions he had given them, whether by word or by his Epistle; he prays that the Lord might direct their minds to a patient waiting for the advent of Christ; he especially warns them against that unsteadiness and idleness which prevailed among them; he enjoins them to discountenance and admonish all those who would not be persuaded by his injunctions; and he concludes his Epistle by appending with his own hand his apostolic benediction, as a token of its genuineness (ch. ii. 13—iii.).

§ 3. THE DATE OF THE EPISTLE.

This Epistle was evidently written shortly after the First. Silas and Timothy, as in the First Epistle, are conjoined with Paul in the salutation, and were consequently still in his company when he wrote this Epistle. But when Paul left Corinth, we are not informed that these two fellow-workers accompanied him (Acts xvii. 8); nor, from what appears, were they ever afterwards both together with him. Timothy, we are informed, rejoined Paul at Ephesus (Acts xix. 22); but there is no further mention of Silas in the Acts of the Apostles. Besides, the relations and wants of the Church are similar to those which are presupposed in the First Epistle; similar commendations, warnings, instructions, and prayers are contained in both Epistles; the only difference being what the lapse of a few months might effect in the character and conduct of the Thessalonian Church. A closer indication of time is supposed to be contained in ch. iii. 2, where the apostle entreats the Thessalonians to pray for him that he might be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men—evidently from his unbelieving Jewish opponents—from which it has been inferred that the outbreak of Jewish hatred and fanaticism, when the apostle was dragged before Gallio, was about to take place. At all events, time must be allowed for further information concerning the Church of Thessalonica to have reached the apostle, for the progress which the Thessalonians made in faith and love, and for the further development of the error concerning the advent. We cannot be wrong in fixing the time of the composition of this Epistle to the later part of Paul's residence in Corinth, or to the close of A.D. 53. Calvin is undoubtedly mistaken when he supposes that this Epistle was written during the last journey of Paul to Jerusalem, supposing that the "unreasonable and wicked men" were the Judaizing Christians who dogged his steps.

Some—Grotius, Ewald, Laurent, Baur, Davidson (2nd edit.)—reverse the order of the Epistles, and suppose that this Second Epistle was in reality the First. But the reasons which they give for this opinion are without weight. The mark of genuineness, at the close of the Epistle, was given in consequence of the existence of a spurious Epistle (ch. ii. 2), and not because it was the first Epistle which the apostle wrote. The Second Epistle presupposes the First. The First Epistle describes how the Thessalonians received the Word of God, whilst the Second Epistle mentions their progress in faith, love, and patience. The First Epistle treats of the uncertainty of the advent; the Second Epistle corrects the misapprehension of the Thessalonians concerning that uncertainty. The First Epistle adverts to the spirit of disorder, the germs of which the apostle saw in the Thessalonian Church; the Second Epistle rebukes this spirit still more sharply, as these germs had developed and borne pernicious fruit. The First Epistle had given the Thessalonians commandments to be obeyed; and, in the

Second Epistle, the apostle exhorts them to hold the traditions which he had delivered to them, whether by word or his Epistle.

The place of writing was Corinth. The note at the end of the Epistle, "The Second Epistle to the Thessalonians was written from Athens," although found in very ancient manuscripts, is undoubtedly erroneous; so also are other statements which refer the composition of this Epistle to Berea, Laodicea, or Rome. This, then, is the second of Paul's extant Epistles.

§ 4. THE PECULIARITIES OF THE EPISTLE.

The great peculiarity of this Epistle—that which distinguishes it from all Paul's other Epistles, and imparts to it a peculiar importance, and at the same time renders its exposition a matter of great difficulty—is the prediction of the man of sin, contained in the second chapter (vers. 1—12). This section is distinguished from all the other writings of Paul, and is closely allied to the prophecies of Daniel and the apocalyptic visions of John. Here the apostle glances into the future, and predicts what is to happen in the latter days. There are other portions of his Epistles in which he refers to what will occur in the last days, and at the period of the manifestation of the sons of God (2 Tim. iii. 1—5; Rom. viii. 19—24), and he also foretells the full conversion of both Jews and Gentiles to the faith of Jesus (Rom. xi. 25); but this is the only passage in all his Epistles where a detailed prophecy is given. This prediction of the man of sin, as already observed, had peculiar attractions to the early Church suffering from persecution; and it has been the subject of numerous dissertations in modern times; its very obscurity being one cause of the interest attached to it, and of the amount of ingenious labour expended on its elucidation.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS.

EXPOSITION.

CHAPTER I.

CONTENTS.—Paul, after the address and salutation, commences this Epistle by rendering thanks to God for the welcome intelligence he had received of the increase of the faith and love of his Thessalonian converts, so that he was enabled to boast of them throughout all the Churches of Achaia, on account of their steadfastness in the endurance of continued persecution. Their present suffering was an evidence of a future state of retribution, when the justice of God would be vindicated, and affliction would be rendered to their persecutors and rest to them the persecuted, on that great day when the Lord Jesus would appear in glory for the destruction of his enemies and the glorification of his people. The apostle expresses his constant prayer for the Thessalonians that God would enable them to walk worthy of their high vocation, so as to be made partakers of that glory which would be conferred on believers at the advent.

Vers. 1, 2.—Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy. This Epistle, like the former, is written in their conjoint names, as all three were engaged in the planting of the Church in Thessalonica. Unto the Church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (For the exposition of these two verses, see remarks on 1 Thess. i. 1, where the address and salutation are almost entirely the same.)

Ver. 3.—We. Not to be restricted to Paul, the plural being used for the singular, as is elsewhere the case (1 Thess. ii. 8; iii. 1); but inclusive of Silas and Timothy, inas-

II. THESSALONIANS.

much as they are mentioned directly before (see note to 1 Thess. i. 2). **Are bound;** feel ourselves morally constrained. **To thank God always for you, brethren** (comp. 1 Thess. i. 2). The apostle first praises his converts for what good was in them, before he censures them for their faults, and in this manner he secures their attention. **As it is meet;** as it is right and proper in the circumstances of the case. The words are not to be considered as a parenthetical clause, far less as a tautological expression (Jowett); but they state that the reason of the apostle's thanksgiving arose from the spiritual condition of the Thessalonians; "with the acknowledgment of personal obligation, Paul joins a recognition of the circumstances of the case" (Hofmann). **Because that your faith groweth exceedingly—superabounds—and the charity of every one of you all.** The subject of the apostle's thanksgiving was the increase of the faith and love of the Thessalonians: faith here being faith in Christ, and love being love to man. Faith and love contain in themselves the whole of the Christian life; faith is its commencement, its source; love is not only its outcome, its spiritual action, but its completion; the climax of the Christian life is to be made perfect in love. Here, however, love is restricted by the context to love to believers, or brotherly love. **Toward each other;** that is, toward your fellow-Christians in Thessalonica. Love is not a mere general affection, but is to be specially manifested—"toward each believer." **Aboundeth; increaseth in intensity.**

Ver. 4.—So that we ourselves. "We"—Paul and Silas and Timothy, the founders of the Church of Thessalonica. "We ourselves," not merely we of our own accord (Hofmann), but we as well as our informants, who brought us this intelligence of the increase of your faith and love. **Glorify in**

you in the Churches of God; that is, in those Churches with which we come in contact; namely, the Church at Corinth and the Churches in Achaia. It would appear from this that several Churches had been founded in Achaia, as, for example, the Church of Cenchrea (Rom. xvi. 1). For your patience and faith; not to be weakened as a Hebraism for "your patient faith," or "for the patience of your faith;" nor is faith to be taken in the sense of faithfulness or fidelity (Lünemann); but, as in the previous verse, it denotes "faith in Christ." Patience is steadfast endurance, which, in order to be of any value in the sight of God, must be combined with faith; stoical endurance is not here nor anywhere else inculcated in Scripture. In all your persecutions and tribulations—afflictions—that ye endure; or, are enduring; the persecution which arose when Paul was at Thessalonica being continued. The patience and faith of the Thessalonians shone the more brilliantly amid persecution and affliction, even as the stars shine brightest in the dark night. To be a true Christian in the time of peace is a great matter; but to be a true Christian in the season of persecution is a greater; faith is then tested in the furnace.

Ver. 5.—Which is a manifest token. A sentence in apposition, so that the words, "which is," printed in italics, ought to be omitted. By "token" is here meant pledge or proof. The reference is not simply to the Thessalonians, but to the whole clause—to the fact of the Thessalonians steadfastly enduring persecutions and affliction; in other words, to their sufferings for the sake of the gospel. Of the righteous—just—judgment of God. Not to be referred to the present state, and particularly to sufferings perfecting the Thessalonians and preparing them for the kingdom of God (Olshausen); but to the future judgment. These words imply that the sufferings of the righteous and the prosperity of their wicked persecutors was a clear proof that there shall be a future state of retribution, when the inequalities of the present state of things will be adjusted, when the apparent violations of justice will be rectified, and when matters will be completely reversed—when the persecutors will be punished and the persecuted rewarded (comp. Phil. i. 28, "And in nothing terrified by your adversaries; which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation and that of God"). That; in order that, indicating the purpose of God's dispensation. Ye may be counted worthy. Paul here finds, in the faith and patience of the Thessalonians amid persecution, an evidence of a state of reward, as well as in the cruelties of their persecutors an evidence of a state of punishment. The idea that man

can merit salvation as a reward from God is not contained in this passage. As all men are sinners, salvation can only be obtained through the merits and mediation of Christ. But with this grace of God, justice is not abolished; the righteous will be rewarded for their faith and patience (comp. Heb. vi. 10; also Heb. xi. 6; Luke vi. 35; 1 Cor. iii. 8; 2 John 8). Of the kingdom of God; namely, the Messianic kingdom which Christ will establish at the advent; here the heavenly state. For which; for the sake of which. Ye also suffer; or rather, *are suffering*; the sufferings being continued down to the time when the apostle wrote this Epistle.

Ver. 6.—Seeing it is; or rather, *if indeed it is; if so be that it is* (R.V.). A hypothetical sentence, not, however, introducing an uncertain or conditional fact, but an emphatic assertion—what is felt by all to be true. A righteous thing with God. Not only will the justice of God be displayed in the rewards of the righteous, in counting them worthy of the kingdom of God for which they suffer, but it will also be displayed in the punishments to be inflicted on their persecutors. To recompense tribulation to them that trouble you. We have here an example of one of the most common defects of our English Version in rendering cognate words by different terms, and thus creating needless perplexities and giving rise to erroneous interpretations; the words "tribulation" and "trouble" are cognate, and hence the verse ought to be rendered as in the R.V., "If so be that it is a righteous thing with God to recompense affliction to them that afflict you."

Ver. 7.—And to you who are troubled—afflicted—rest. The word "rest" here is a noun in the accusative, not a verb, as English readers might at the first glance suppose. It literally denotes relaxation, ease. The meaning of the passage is that it is a righteous thing with God to recompense rest to you who are afflicted. The recompense of the persecutors—those who afflict, is affliction; the recompense of the persecuted—the afflicted, is rest (comp. Matt. xi. 28, 29). The rest or relaxation here mentioned is that which awaits believers, not in this world, but in the next, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest" (Job iii. 17). "There remaineth a rest for the people of God" (Heb. iv. 9). The happiness of heaven on its negative side, as freedom from earthly affliction and persecution, is here stated. It is rest to the weary, freedom to the enslaved, release from sorrow, suffering, and pain, relaxation from toil, ease from noise and turmoil, the quiet haven of peace after being tossed about in the tempestuous ocean. With us; that is, not with us believers in general, or with us tho

apostles, the champions of the faith, and still less with us Jews, the saints of Israel; but with us, the writers of this Epistle, namely, Paul and Silas and Timothy. **When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed;** or, more literally, *at the revelation or apocalypse of the Lord Jesus.* The advent of Christ is generally expressed by another word, *parousia*, denoting "presence;" here the word is *apocalypse*, bringing before us in a more vivid manner the visible manifestation of Christ. The advent of Christ is the period when he who has hitherto been concealed will be manifested as the supreme Ruler and Judge of the world. **From heaven;** where now he is concealed from human view, seated at the right hand of God. **With his mighty angels;** not with his host of angels, but, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, "with the angels of his power"—serving his power and proclaiming his might. **It is the uniform declaration of Scripture** that Christ will come to judgment attended by his holy angels (Matt. xvi. 27; xxiv. 31; Jude 14). And these angels are "the angels of his power," sent forth to execute his commands. By their instrumentality the dead shall be called from their graves, and the wicked separated from among the just (1 Thess. iv. 16; Matt. xiii. 49).

Ver. 8.—In flaming fire; not the instrument of punishment—"in flaming fire taking vengeance;" but a further description of the glory of Christ's appearance—"revealed in flaming fire." In the Old Testament God is represented as appearing in flaming fire, as when he manifested himself to Moses in the burning bush (Exod. iii. 2; Acts vii. 30); and especially his coming to judgment is represented as coming in fire (Ps. xevii. 3). What is there asserted of God is here referred to Christ (comp. Rev. xix. 22). There is also a probable reference to the Shechinah or cloud of glory in which Christ will appear for judgment (Rev. i. 7). Some also suppose a reference to the fire of the universal conflagration which shall usher in the last day (2 Pet. iii. 10), and others to the fire which shall consume the ungodly, but it is best to restrict the expression to the glory of Christ's manifestation. **Taking vengeance;** literally, *giving*; that is, awarding or allotting vengeance, representing the act, not of a conqueror or of an avenger, but of a righteous Judge. **On them that know not God—the unbelieving Gentiles—and that;** or rather, *on them that*; a second class being here denoted. **Obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ;** namely, the unbelieving Jews. The ignorance of the one and the disobedience of the other were the causes of their punishment.

Ver. 9.—Who; namely, the unbelieving Gentiles and Jews. **Shall be punished;**

literally, *shall pay the penalty; shall suffer punishment* (R.V.). With everlasting destruction; or rather, *even everlasting destruction*; the words being in apposition. "Destruction" here denotes ruin, death; the word is only used in Paul's Epistles (1 Cor. v. 8; 1 Thess. v. 3; 1 Tim. vi. 9). The Greek word translated "everlasting," from dogmatic reasons, has given rise to much controversy. Here it appears to denote eternal—eternity to come. The eternal punishment of the wicked seems here asserted; a terrible declaration, which the mind shudders to contemplate. The observation of Olshausen is worthy of attention: "This is the only passage in Paul's Epistles in which everlasting damnation is openly declared, whereas not a few occur in which a bringing back of all the lost ones is apparently assumed as possible;" but he adds, "For the supposition that Paul did indeed in the earliest of his Epistles still teach everlasting damnation, but gave it up in later times, there exists no sufficient foundation, because the bringing back again is nowhere freely and openly declared."¹ **From the presence (or, face) of the Lord.** This clause has received a threefold interpretation. Some (De Wette, Hofmann) take the preposition "from" in a causal sense, denoting the efficient cause of the punishment of the wicked—that they will be as it were blasted by the face of the Lord. Others (Chrysostom, Theophylact) take it in a temporal sense, denoting the swiftness of the punishment of the wicked—that their punishment will rise directly on the appearance of Christ (Lünemann, Alford). And others take it in a local sense, denoting banishment or separation—that the wicked will be expelled from that joy and glory which reign in the presence of Christ; they shall be banished away from the presence of the Lord. This last interpretation seems to be the correct meaning; it gives to the preposition its full force. **And from the glory of his power;** not a Hebraism for "his mighty glory" (Jowett), but from that glory which has its origin in his power—the wicked will be banished from the manifestation of his power in the glorification of his saints. The punishment of the wicked on its negative side is here stated. As the presence of the glorified Jesus will constitute the happiness of heaven, so banishment from his presence will constitute the misery of hell, because the soul is then cut off from the source of all good and of all holiness.

Ver. 10.—When; defining the period when this judgment of the wicked will occur. **He;** namely, the Lord Jesus. **Shall come to be glorified;** the purpose of his coming. **In;** not "through," or "among," but "in," as

¹ Olshausen on Thessalonians, *in loco*.

the sphere or element of his glory. His saints; not the holy angels who will accompany him to judgment, but holy men whom he has redeemed with his blood. Christ will be glorified in his saints, inasmuch as their glory was the result of his sufferings and death, and their holiness is the reflection of his holiness; "They will reflect as in a mirror the glory of the Lord." And to be admired; wondered at, praised. In all them that believe; or, *believed*. The work of faith is past; the result of faith, the state of sight and glory, has commenced. The glorification of believers will thus become the glorification of Christ. The glory of Christ does not arise from the punishment of the wicked, but from the glorification of believers. Christ will indeed be glorified in the punishment of the wicked. His justice will be manifested and vindicated; but his glory will be especially seen in the manifestation of his mercy toward believers. Because our testimony; namely, the testimony of Paul and his associates, Silas and Timothy. Among you; or rather, *unto you*. Was believed; to be considered as a parenthesis. In that day; namely, the day of the Lord's advent, to be connected with the commencement of the verse, "In that day when he shall come to be glorified in his saints." Some, overlooking the parenthesis, render the words either, "because our testimony concerning that day was believed among you;" or, "because our testimony among you shall be believed on that day"—assented to by the whole universe; but the first rendering gives a false meaning to the preposition, and the second a false construction to the verb, as if it were future.

Ver. 11.—Wherefore; with a view to this consummation, in order that Christ may be glorified in you. We pray always for you

that our God would count you worthy of this calling; or rather, *of your calling* (R.V.). The calling was, properly speaking, only the commencement of the Christian life, but as it was the first link in a chain that terminated in glory, it is used to denote the whole Christian life—your vocation as Christians. And fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness. The pronoun "his" is not in the original. The words have been differently rendered: some render them "all God's pleasure in our goodness;" others restrict both words to mean "every desire of goodness" (R.V.). And the work of faith; that faith which is active, living, productive of good works (see exposition on 1 Thess. i. 3). With power; or, *in power*; to be taken adverbially, and to be connected with the verb "fulfil:" "That God would mightily fulfil in you all moral goodness, and a faith which is energetic."

Ver. 12.—That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; or simply, *of our Lord Jesus*, "Christ" not being in the original. The "name of our Lord Jesus" is not a mere periphrasis for the Lord Jesus himself, but the name denotes his nature and character. The second petition of our Lord's prayer is "Hallowed be thy Name," and this the apostle applies to Christ; he prays that his Name may be hallowed among the Thessalonians—an incidental proof of his divinity. May be glorified in you, and you in him; a twofold glorification; Christ is glorified in believers, when by their holiness they promote his cause and reflect his glory; and believers are glorified in Christ, when they receive out of his infinite fulness. According to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Some suppose that the epithet "God" also belongs to Jesus Christ, but the construction hardly bears this meaning.

HOMILETICS.

Ver. 4.—*Christian patience*. 1. *Its nature*. It denotes steadfast endurance. Negatively, not stoical endurance or apathetic fatalism. Positively, a spirit of calm submission to the providence of God and resignation to his will. 2. *Its source*. It has its root in faith; it is one of the fruits of the Spirit; and it is combined with hope. 3. *Means of acquiring it*. Pray to God as the Giver of patience; look to Christ as the Example of patience; submit to affliction as the cause of patience; cultivate faith as the support of patience; and meditate on heaven as the goal of patience.

Vers. 6, 7.—*A future state of retribution*. Rewards and punishments in this world are unequally distributed. The righteous are often persecuted and afflicted, whereas the wicked are often happy and prosperous. Herod sits upon the throne, and Christ expires on the cross. But this state of things shall be rectified. Christ shall recompense to the wicked tribulation—they shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord; and he shall recompense to the righteous rest—they shall be counted worthy of the kingdom of God for which they suffer.

Vers. 7, 8.—*The manner of Christ's second coming.* 1. *He shall come in person.* Not merely in spirit or in power, but in a visible form; he shall be revealed from heaven; every eye shall see him. 2. *He shall come in power.* He shall be accompanied by the angels of his might, who shall execute his commands, call the dead from their graves, assemble together the elect, separate between the righteous and the wicked, and consign the wicked to the abodes of woe. 3. *He shall come in glory.* "In flaming fire"—in the Shechinah, the cloud of glory. 4. *He shall come in justice;* punishing the ungodly and rewarding his faithful servants.

Vers. 9, 10.—*The coming of Christ for judgment.* 1. *Its reality.* The difference between his first and second coming. Then he came to save the world, now he shall come to judge the world. Then he came as Son of man, now he shall come as Son of God. 2. *Its purpose.* He shall come to award punishment to his enemies; they shall be for ever banished from his presence, the Source of all happiness, the Author of all holiness. He shall come for the salvation of his people—to conquer all their enemies, to rescue their bodies from the grave, to acknowledge them as his before an assembled universe, and to receive them into the abodes of eternal happiness.

Vers. 10, 12.—*Christ glorified in his saints.* 1. By their holy conduct they display his character. His image is impressed upon them; they mirror forth the glory of the Lord. 2. By their active exertion in well-doing they advance his glory. 3. Their future glorification is the glory of Christ. The glory of his work, in that he saved them; the glory of his grace, in that he redeemed them; the glory of his power, in that he has rescued them from all their enemies. Throughout eternity believers will be jewels in the Saviour's crown.

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Ver. 3.—*Thanksgiving for the spiritual progress of the Thessalonians.* Timothy had brought the apostle tidings of their faith, their love, their sufferings, and their patience.

I. THE GROUNDS OF HIS THANKSGIVING. "Because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the love of each one of you all toward each other aboundeth." 1. *The marked growth of their faith.* At his last writing to them he had hinted at deficiencies in their faith (1 Thess. iii. 10), but he had now learned that it had grown exceedingly. (1) Growth is a sign of a living faith. (2) It is right to pray for the increase of faith (Luke xvii. 5). (3) Faith grows (a) in its strength (b) and in its range. The Thessalonians had been able to receive new truths, and to bear the shock of persecution with calmness. Their faith worked by love (Gal. v. 6), and the trial of their faith worked patience (Jas. i. 3). 2. *The marked growth of their love to one another.* He had prayed for an increase of love among them, and he was thankful that his prayer had been heard. (1) Their love had grown in fervour. (a) Their persecutions had endeared them the more to each other. (b) They "looked not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Phil. ii. 4). They "bore one another's burdens" (Gal. vi. 2). They were "kindly affectioned to one another with brotherly love" (Rom. xii. 10). (2) Their love had grown in its range. They had an individualizing solicitude in each other's welfare, no saint being outside the pale of their kindly regards.

II. THE OBLIGATION AND APPROPRIATENESS OF HIS THANKSGIVING. "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet." 1. *The apostle regards it as a positive debt which it would be injustice not to discharge,* for he feels that God is the true Author of all the blessings they had received. 2. *He regards it as demanded by the very proprieties of the case.* "As it is meet"—that this recognition should be made.—T. C.

Ver. 4.—*The apostle's interest in the Thessalonian Church as manifested by his praises of it to other Churches.* He had formerly listened to their praises from the lips of other Churches; he could now sound their praises at Corinth and elsewhere, ascribing all the while due praise to God.

I. THE GROUND OF HIS PRAISES. "For your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure." 1. *Afflictions, whether in the form of sharp persecution or of more general trouble, are the lot of God's faithful children.* They are "appointed thereunto" (1 Thess. ii. 3). 2. *It is the glory of a Christian to bear such afflictions with patience and faith.* The Thessalonians had not been "moved by these afflictions" (1 Thess. iii. 3). (1) Their patience was the result of their faith. "The trial of your faith worketh patience" (Jas. i. 3). Their trials did not uproot their faith. They had "the patience of hope." The faith and the patience are always closely allied. "I know thy faith and thy patience" (Rev. ii. 19). (2) It is for the glory of God and for the good of believers that "patience should have its perfect work" (Jas. i. 4; 1 Pet. ii. 20). (3) It is necessary to the inheritance of the promises (Heb. vi. 12; x. 36).

II. IT IS NOT UNLAWFUL, BUT EXPEDIENT, THAT A MINISTER SHOULD GLORY IN HIS PEOPLE. Not in their social rank, or riches, or numbers, but in the graces of the Spirit manifested in their life. The apostle elsewhere advises us not to glory in men, but in the Lord. But in this case the glory is given to God, not to man.

III. IT PROMOTES THE SPIRITUAL WELFARE OF CHURCHES TO HEAR OF THE SUCCESS OF THE GOSPEL IN OTHER CHURCHES. The example of faith, love, and patience at Thessalonica would stimulate the saints in all Greece.—T. C.

Ver. 5.—*The significance of these sufferings in relation to Divine judgment.* He comforts them with the thought of the certainty of the future judgment.

I. THERE WILL BE A RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT OF MEN. "Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth" (Ps. lviii. 11). The afflictions of the righteous and the prosperity of the wicked in the present world are not inconsistent with this righteous judgment. The problem is an old one, how to understand the mystery of Divine providence. The Book of Job sets forth its conditions and its mysteries. The disturbing effect of sin is not sufficiently considered in estimating the character of the Divine administration. It is the inequalities in Divine providence that lead us to expect a future rectification of wrongs; for God's judgment is righteous.

II. THE PATIENT HEROISM OF THE SAINTS IS ITSELF A SIGN OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT. "Which is a token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer." 1. *It is not that believers suffer, receiving here their evil things, while the wicked receive their good things.* 2. *It is not because God is just and there must be a future judgment.* 3. *It is not that the persecution was an indication how the judgment would go at the last day.* 4. *It is that the patience of the saints accredited them, by the righteous judgment of God, as meet heirs of his kingdom,* while it was a presage of the coming judgment, when the future would bring its double compensation for the present. The idea is the same as in the Philippian Epistle: "And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God" (Phil. i. 28). It follows, therefore, (1) that God is not forgetful or indifferent to the sufferings of his saints; (2) that patience is a special qualification for the enjoyment of God's kingdom; (3) that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the future happiness of the saints, who will have an eternal weight of glory.—T. C.

Vers. 6—10.—*The future judgment as to its righteousness, time, circumstances, and results to the two classes concerned in it.* The apostle proceeds to set forth the certainty of the Divine judgment as affecting the saints and their persecutors.

I. THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THIS JUDGMENT. "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense affliction to them that afflict you; and to you who are afflicted rest with us." 1. *An appeal is made to man's innate sense of justice.* A want of this element of justice in human character is regarded as a defect. A right-minded man is indignant at wrong, and delights in the retribution that falls upon wrong-doers. This sentiment of justice is but a reflection of Divine character, for we are made in the image of that God who hates sin with "a perfect hatred" (Ps. cxxxix. 22). 2. *God is "not unrighteous who taketh vengeance"* (Rom. iii. 5), for he has established in his government of the world an inseparable connection between sin and misery. Therefore we may expect to see a Divine retaliation upon transgressors—"affliction to them that

afflict you"—the penalty partaking of the very character of the sin. On the other hand, God is not "unrighteous to forget your work of faith and labour of love." The afflicted shall be recompensed with "rest," as well as reward for all their patience.

II. THE TIME OF THE JUDGMENT. "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven." 1. *There is a day appointed for the judgment of the world*; for God "hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained" (Acts xvii. 30, 31). 2. *The day is that which is to be the manifestation of the Lord from heaven*. He is now in heaven, "sitting at the right hand of God" (Acts vii. 56); but he shall then come forth in glory to those who "wait for him," to the judgment of the world. 3. *The time of the judgment is unknown to man*. The day of the Lord "shall come as a thief in the night."

III. THE SUBORDINATE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE JUDGMENT. 1. *The angelic retinue*. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with the angels of his power." (1) They manifest his power and enhance his glory. They will be with him when he "shall come in glory, and shall sit on the throne of his glory" (Matt. xxv. 31). (2) They execute his purposes, whether of wrath or mercy. (a) They "gather together his elect from the four winds" (Mark xiii. 27). (b) They "shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire" (Matt. xiii. 41, 42). 2. *The flaming glory of his manifestation*. It shall be "in flaming fire;" not as the instrument of vengeance, but as enhancing the glory of the Divine presence. "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people" (Ps. l. 3, 4).

IV. THE RESULTS OF THE JUDGMENT TO THE TWO CLASSES. 1. *The class of persecutors*. "Those which afflict you." (1) Wicked men cannot endure the saints. It is with them as with Cain, who slew his brother. Wherefore? "Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous" (1 John iii. 12). (2) The cry of the saints rises to heaven against them. "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" (Rev. vi. 10). (3) The persecutors are of two classes. "Them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." (a) The first class refers to Gentile persecutors. "They know not God." Ignorance is their great sin. They had resisted the light of nature. (a) It was wilful ignorance, for they had the truth brought to their doors in Thessalonica; (b) their ignorance made confidence in God impossible, (γ) as well as an intelligent worship of God. (b) The second class refers to Jewish persecutors—"that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." As ignorance was the sin of the Gentiles, disobedience was the sin of the Jews. They knew God, but rejected the gospel of Christ. They were fiercer persecutors of the saints even than the Gentiles. (a) Christ is the Author of the gospel as well as its theme. (b) The gospel is to be obeyed as well as received, and is therefore called "the obedience of faith;" for faith without obedience is dead, as obedience without faith has no value. (4) The judgment upon the persecutors. It is described first generally and then more definitely. The Lord Jesus shall take vengeance upon them. They "shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." This represents "the wrath of the Lamb" (Rev. vi. 16, 17). (a) The judgment is everlasting destruction. This does not imply annihilation—an idea equally opposed to Scripture and to the facts of natural science. The term "everlasting" associated with it neutralizes the idea of annihilation, which implies a point of time in which the wicked cease to exist. The duration of the punishment will be as the duration of the blessedness (Rev. xvi. 26; Heb. ix. 14; Matt. xxv. 46). (b) It involves separation from "the face of the Lord, and the glory of his strength." It is heaven to "see Christ as he is," to be "with him where he is, that they may behold his glory." The sum of all woe is, "Depart from me." A great gulf is fixed between the saved and the lost (Luke xvi. 26). The wicked are to be outside the apocalyptic city of God. "Outside are dogs" (Rev. xvi. 14, 15). 2. *The class of saints*. The results of the judgment as affecting them are thus described. (1) They are to be accounted "worthy of the kingdom of God." (a) They are heirs of it, as children of God. (b) They are called into it. (c) The kingdom "shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High" (Dan. vii. 27). "The saints shall judge the world" (1 Cor. vi. 2, 3). They shall "inherit the kingdom"

(Matt. xxv. 34). This is "the grace that is to be brought to them at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. i. 13). (2) They shall receive rest—"rest with us," as the Lord's recompense for all their sufferings. It points to their release from persecutions. (a) There is a rest—a sabbatism—"for the people of God" (Heb. iv. 9). They "shall rest from their labours, and their works do follow them" (Rev. xiv. 13). (b) It is rest in the fellowship of all saints—"rest with us." (3) The effect of the Lord's second advent—"that he may be glorified in his saints, and be admired in all them that believe." (a) The Church is to be "the glory of Christ." Jesus said, "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them" (John xvii. 10, 22). "The beauty of the Lord God shall be upon her," and "his glory shall be seen upon her" (Ps. xc. 17); Isa. lx. 2). The Church is addressed thus: "There shall also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God" (Isa. lxii. 3). (b) Christ shall be an Object of wonder to believers in that day. "To be admired in all them that believe." The wonder will spring out of the extraordinary manifestations of his glory and power.—T. C.

Vers. 11, 12.—*Prayer for the Thessalonians in prospect of their glorification.* His wish was that they would undergo the necessary preparatory work in anticipation of their future glorification. It was a double prayer.

I. A PRAYER THAT HIS CONVERTS MIGHT APPROVE THE REALITY OF THEIR CALLING BY THEIR FAITH AND LIFE. "Whereunto we pray always for you, brethren, that God would count you worthy of his calling." 1. *The nature and intent of the calling.* (1) It is the effectual call of the Spirit in conversion (1 Cor. i. 24). (2) It is according to the Divine purpose (Rom. viii. 28). (3) It is (a) high (Phil. iii. 14); (b) holy (2 Tim. i. 9); (c) heavenly (Heb. iii. 1). (4) It is a call (a) to fellowship with Christ (1 Cor. i. 9); (b) to holiness (1 Thess. iv. 7); (c) to liberty (Gal. v. 13); (d) to peace (Col. iii. 15); (e) to glory and virtue (2 Pet. i. 3); (f) to eternal life (1 Tim. vi. 12). 2. *A walk worthy of such a calling.* "That God would count you worthy of this calling." How can any sinful man be accounted worthy of it? He is already called, and God's counting him worthy proceeds on the supposition of that pre-existing fact. It supposes: (1) That their life would be found at the last day in harmony with the call (1 Thess. v. 24). (2) That they would meanwhile "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called" (Eph. iv. 1), and "make their calling and election sure" (2 Pet. i. 10). (3) That they would have occasion to praise God for the call (1 Pet. ii. 9).

II. A PRAYER THAT HIS CONVERTS MIGHT FULLY REALIZE THE BLESSED PROCESS THROUGH WHICH THE APOSTLE'S OBJECT MIGHT BE SECURED. The process is twofold. 1. *That God would work in them every delight in moral goodness.* "Fulfil every good pleasure of goodness." (1) Good men delight in goodness and in doing good. (2) It is God who implants this delight in them; for they are "his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Eph. ii. 10). They are, therefore, to be "zealous of good works" (Titus ii. 14), and to provoke one another to "good works" (Heb. x. 24). This goodness is one of the Spirit's fruits (Gal. v. 22). 2. *That God would fulfil the work of faith with power.* (1) Faith is an operative grace; it "worketh by love;" it justifies itself by good works. (2) It is a Divine work. Therefore, as something may have been lacking therein, the apostle prays that he who is the Author of their faith would be the Finisher of it (Heb. xii. 2). (3) It is a work done with power. At their conversion, the Thessalonians felt the "greatness of his power to us-ward who believe" (Eph. i. 19), and the same power is needed to make it triumphant as a principle of action and as a principle of endurance. "Our sufficiency is of God;" we are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation" (1 Pet. i. 5).

III. THE ULTIMATE OBJECT OF THE APOSTLE'S PRAYERS FOR THE THESSALONIANS. "That the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him." 1. *The very Name of Christ is to be glorified in the saints.* (1) Because it is "a Name that is above every name, at which every knee should bow" (Phil. ii. 10). (2) Because it is the Name for the sake of which the saints are now "hated of all nations" (Matt. xxiv. 9). (3) Because it is the Name by which the saints are called (Jas. ii. 7). (4) It is glorified in the saints (a) in their holiness of life; (b) in their victory over the world and sin; (c) in their steadfast loyalty to him; (d) in their final exaltation to "his kingdom and glory." 2. *The saints will be glorified in Christ.* (1) In his wear-

ing their nature on the throne; for "he is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb. ii. 11). (2) In their being clothed with his righteousness—"comely with the comeliness he has put upon them." (3) In their "reigning with him," and "being glorified together" (2 Tim. ii. 12; Rom. viii. 17). They shall be "partakers of his glory." 3. *The spring or source of all the blessings of the saints.* "According to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ." (1) The whole work of salvation till it ends in glory illustrates "the exceeding riches of his grace." (a) The purpose of the Father is of grace; (b) the mediation of the Son is of grace; (c) the blessings of the new covenant are all of grace. (2) This grace has a unity of source—"in our God and the Lord Jesus Christ;" implying oneness of essence and the coequal Godhead of Father and Son.—T. C.

Vers. 1—4.—*The introduction.* I. *THE ADDRESS.* 1. *The description.* St. Paul repeats the opening words of the First Epistle. He addresses the same Church; he describes it in the same sacred words. It is "in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." He could say of it nothing higher, nothing holier. To be in God, in Christ, is of all positions the loftiest, of all blessings the most precious. None are so highly exalted as those who are nearest to Christ; none have such rich store of heavenly treasure as those who abide in him, in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead. There is but one slight variation. In the First Epistle he said, "the Father;" here it is "our Father." The pronoun implies a close, endearing, affectionate relationship. The Church is in God our Father, in the embrace of his fatherly love, chosen by his electing grace; in the Lord Jesus Christ, saved by his precious death, living in that life which flows from Christ, which is Christ. 2. *The salutation.* He uses the same words as in the First Epistle; he could find no more suitable terms to express his good wishes for his converts. He could desire nothing better for them than grace, and peace; grace, the origin, the source, of every highest blessing; peace, the sweet and holy end, the very crown, of the Christian life. It is from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ that these and all other blessings flow. St. Paul joins together the two Divine Persons; they could not be thus associated as the one ultimate source of grace and peace, were they not both alike Divine. Peace is the fruit of the Spirit; with the Holy Spirit whom the Lord Jesus sends unto us from the Father comes the sacred gift of peace. Grace and peace come from God the Father by the incarnation, atonement, intercession of God the Son, through the indwelling presence of God the Holy Ghost. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God flow into the Christian heart through the fellowship of the Holy Ghost. All that the Christian can desire for himself, for his friends, for the whole Church, comes from God; he seeks it of God in prayer; he knows that God will hear. "This is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us."

II. *THE THANKSGIVING.* 1. *The duty.* Thanksgiving is a debt which we owe to God, a debt which we must always acknowledge, which we can never fully discharge. It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks for all things unto God. We must thank him for his grace given to ourselves; and if that grace abides in us, we shall feel ourselves bound to thank him for the working of the same grace in others. We shall regard every true conversion, every increase of grace in others, as a blessing granted to the whole Church and to ourselves. We shall feel a keen, living interest in each soul that is gathered into Christ's flock, and so share the angels' joy over one sinner that repenteth. For the welfare of each member affects the whole Church; when "one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it." Such was the feeling of St. Paul. "We are bound," he says—we owe it as a debt—"to thank God always for you." He fulfils his own precept; he gives thanks always. The thanksgiving of the faithful Christian must be continuous, never-ending. 2. *The ground of St. Paul's thanksgiving.* (1) The faith of the Thessalonians. He had gladly recognized their faith and love in his First Epistle; he had again and again exhorted them to abound more and more. Now, writing a second time after a short interval, he thanks God for the growth of their faith. It had increased "exceedingly;" he uses one of those strong words which his ardent feelings so often suggested. "Lord, increase our faith," is a prayer which we cannot make too often. Faith must grow if it is true and living; for it is the evidence of things not seen; it

brings the cross of Christ, the presence of God, within the range of our mental view. That holy vision will draw us nearer ever by its constraining power, quickening and deepening in our hearts the faith which first brought us by the leading of the Spirit to the Saviour. The faith of the Thessalonians was growing exceedingly; so it will be with us, in spite of the unbelief and indifference which so fill the air, if we persevere in prayer, and try, in humble dependence on the grace of God, to fashion our lives according to our prayers. (2) Their love was abounding also. Love is the fairest ornament of a Christian Church. Faith is the root, love is the fruit. The tree that grows downwards will grow upwards also; the fair growth of foliage, flower, and fruit will bear some proportion to the unseen depth and strength of the root below. The Thessalonian Church was rich in the fruit of the Spirit. And their love was not only increasing in fervour, but in range also. It was not partial, not limited to this man or that man according to natural tastes and similarities of disposition. It extended throughout the Church; the love of each one of them all was abounding toward one another. It is a bright picture. Indeed, the Thessalonians were not without their faults, as we find in ch. ii. and iii.; but the apostle, in his love and thankfulness, gladly dwells on the spiritual progress of the Church before he proceeds to notice the shortcomings of individual members. It shows his love and his wisdom. The encouragement of the opening verses would dispose the Thessalonians to receive in a good spirit the few reproofs that follow. 3. *The expression of his thankfulness.* He not only gives thanks to God; he glories before men. "We ourselves," he says—"we glory." Though his deep humility might have withheld him from glorying over a result which was due, under God, to his own zealous labours, the rapid growth of their faith and love so filled him with exuberant gladness that he could not refrain his lips. "God forbid," he says elsewhere, "that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." But he is really glorying in the cross now; he glories, not in his own achievements, but in the triumphs of the cross. It was the work of God in real truth, not his work; he knew it well. Indeed, he had laboured abundantly—that he knew, he could not help knowing it; but he gladly explains the abundance of his labours by the abundance of grace that was vouchsafed unto him. "Yet not I," he says, "but the grace of God that was with me." The faith, hope, and love of the Thessalonians proved, as he said in the First Epistle, their election. God had chosen them to be his own; his grace worked mightily in them. And now St. Paul was glorying in the faith and patience of his converts. They were in great affliction; he sympathized with them, he comforted them; but yet he rejoiced over them. Their affliction by the grace of God was turned to a blessing; it proved the steadfastness of their faith and their patience, and it strengthened them.

LESSONS. 1. Thankfulness is the Christian's duty; thank God always. 2. Especially thank him for his grace working in his people. 3. Glory in the victories of grace, not in worldly successes. 4. Pray for continual progress in faith, love, patience.—B. C. C.

Vers. 5—7.—*The persecutions of the Thessalonians.* I. THE MEANING OF AFFLICTION. 1. *It does not mean that God is angry with us.* Job's friends thought so. So did Asaph once; but when he went into the sanctuary of God his eyes were enlightened; he understood then that God himself is the Portion of his people; that there is nothing upon earth to be desired in comparison with him; that though heart and flesh may fail, God is enough, and more than enough, for his chosen in this world, and in the world to come will receive them to glory. God's dealings with men are often misinterpreted; people use the word "judgment" carelessly and without knowledge. Affliction would be almost intolerable, if it were indeed always a proof of the Divine wrath. But, God be thanked, he himself has told us it comes in love. 2. *It is a trial of our faith.* Satan said, "Doth Job serve God for nought?" The world often says so now; it imputes lower motives; it refuses to believe in unselfish goodness. The man who can say in the midst of troubles, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the Name of the Lord," is a living proof of the reality, of the sustaining power, of the presence of God; one of those miracles of grace which, thank God, are still daily wrought around us in the world. These things are among the facts registered by the observer of spiritual truths—facts as real as the facts of external nature, and of far deeper and more abiding moment. 3. *It worketh patience.* The trial of God's saints

is more precious than that of gold which perisheth. Gold is tried by fire; God's people are tried in the furnace of affliction. Affliction, meekly borne, hath a refining power; it elevates and refines the whole character; "it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby." Faith is strengthened by trials; patience is acquired by the habit of enduring affliction. Without endurance, without suffering, there is no opportunity of developing the grace of patience.

II. THE ULTIMATE ISSUE OF PERSECUTION. 1. *To the persecuted.* Rest—rest with all saints; with St. Paul who had been the means of their conversion, who was then writing to comfort them. The weary and heavy laden who come to Christ, as he bids them, find in him rest for their souls even in this present life. There is an inner rest of the spirit, amid outward unrest and trouble, which is the pledged possession of the soul that hath found Christ and resteth in faith on him. "Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength;" or rather, as in the margin, "the Lord Jehovah is the Rock of ages." The only rest for the penitent, for the sorrowful, is on the breast of Jesus. We find rest there now; but the truest, deepest rest is yet to come in the kingdom of God. "Requiescat in pace," we say of the departed. They are found worthy of that rest in the kingdom of God who have endured affliction in faith and patience. God is pleased, in his gracious condescension, to call them worthy. "They shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy." That worthiness is of God; it is his gift; he makes them worthy by his grace. He called them not because they were worthy, says St. Augustine; rather by his choice he makes them worthy. It is not their merit but his election, not their goodness but his grace, that makes them what they are. They have not chosen him, but he hath chosen them that they should bring forth much fruit. They are not wise, or strong, or holy; but Christ their Lord is all. He is present with them, abiding in them by his Spirit, purging away their sins, communicating to them more and more of his own holiness and love. As he is, so are they in this world; and they know that, when he shall appear, they shall be like him, for they shall see him as he is. For his sake they are counted worthy of the kingdom of God, and in the hope of that kingdom they are willing now to suffer. But these present sufferings are not worthy to be compared with the coming glory. They know it, and they suffer patiently, for they recognize that great truth that only by the way of the cross can we enter into the kingdom of heaven. 2. *To the persecutors.* God will recompense affliction to those who afflict his saints. They who persecute the Lord's disciples persecute the Lord himself. It pertains to his justice that such must receive the due reward of their deeds. It is right; and because it is right, it must be so. Christians must pray for their persecutors; they must do what lieth in them to soften their hearts, to save their souls, to avert the coming judgment. But when the judgment comes they can but stand by, and recognize in solemn awe the justice of the most holy God.

LESSONS. 1. Chastisements are sent in mercy; be patient, be thankful. 2. Chastisement is only grievous if we do not understand its meaning; accept it as sent from God; take it as a cross; be careful not to lose its blessed fruits. 3. Think of the great joy of those who are counted worthy of the kingdom of God; let that high hope be your comfort in trouble. 4. Envy not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways.—B. C. C.

Vers. 7—10.—*The great day.* I. THE JUDGMENT OF THE WICKED. 1. *The revelation of the Judge.* It is the Lord Jesus, who once was despised and rejected of men; he is ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. He shall come as God once came down on Mount Sinai, in the like awful glory. (1) With the angels. They shall gather the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire. The angels will be the ministers of his justice—the blessed angels who are now the messengers of his love and grace. Now they rejoice over each sinner that repenteth; then they will cast the impenitent into the everlasting fire. We think of the angels as gentle, loving, holy, as our friends and guardians; they are so, so far as we are Christ's. They desire to look into the mysteries of redemption; they announced the Saviour's birth; they ministered to him in his temptation, his agony; they celebrated

his resurrection and ascension. Now they are sent forth to minister for them that shall be heirs of salvation; they encamp round about those who fear the Lord, and deliver them. They help in carrying on his blessed work of love. But they are holy; they hate evil; they must turn away from those who have yielded themselves to the dominion of the evil one; they must execute at the last the awful judgment of God. Fearful thought, that the blessed angels, loving and holy as they are, must one day cast the hardened sinner into hell, as once they cast Satan out of heaven. (2) In flaming fire. The Lord shall be revealed in flaming fire, in that glory which he had before the world was. His throne is fiery flame (Dan. vii. 9). He himself is a consuming fire. The sight will be appalling to the lost, full of unutterable terror; "they shall say to the rocks, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us." "By thine agony and bloody sweat, by thy cross and passion, good Lord, deliver us." 2. *The lost.* Two classes are mentioned here. (1) Those who know not God—the heathen. They might have known him. Some of them did know him. They had not the Law, the outward Law, but it was written in their hearts; God spoke to them in the voice of conscience. They listened; they did by nature the things contained in the Law. Such men, we are sure, God in his great mercy will accept and save. But, alas! the fearful picture drawn by St. Paul in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans represents with only too much truth the general state of the heathen world in the apostolic times. Their blindness was criminal; it was the result of wilful and habitual sin; their ignorance was without excuse. (2) Those who obeyed not the gospel. All, whether Jews or Gentiles, who had heard the preaching of Christ. They had heard, as we have, all that the Lord Jesus had done and suffered for us; they had had the opportunity of hearing his holy precepts. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light." To know the gospel and not to obey it, to have the light around us and not to admit it into our hearts, not to walk as children of light—this must bring the judgment of God upon the disobedient. The greater the light, the heavier the responsibility of those who sin against light and knowledge. 3. *The punishment.* The Lord Jesus will award vengeance. "Vengeance is mine; I will recompense, saith the Lord." Terrible thought, that vengeance must come from him, the most loving Saviour, who loved the souls of men with a love so burning, so intense in its Divine tenderness! But it must be so. The exceeding guilt of sin is manifest in this; it turns the chiefest of blessings into an increase of condemnation; the cross is utter death to the impenitent and the ungodly. And that vengeance takes effect in destruction. The destruction is eternal; then it is not annihilation. It is the destruction of all gladness, hope, all that makes life worth living; it is the exclusion from the face of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. Only the pure in heart can see God. The lost souls cannot see his face. The exclusion is eternal; is it endless? It continues through the ages; will those ages of misery ever end in restoration? Can a soul, once so hardened in guilt that it must be shut out of the presence of God, ever repent in that exclusion? It sinned obstinately against light during its time of probation; can it recover itself now that the light is withdrawn? It is hardened through the deceitfulness of sin and the power of evil habits; can it break those chains of darkness now? These are dark, awful questions. We may ask, on the other hand, how can "God be all in all," if sin is to exist for ever? how can it be that "in Christ shall all be made alive," while there is still a hell in the universe of God? The subject is beset with difficulties and perplexities; it excites bewildering, harrowing thoughts. We must leave it where Holy Scripture leaves it. We would gladly believe, if it were possible, that there is hope beyond the grave for those who die unblessed; but such an expectation has no scriptural authority beyond a few slight and doubtful hints. Who would dare to trust to a hope so exceeding slender? No; if we shrink in terror from the thought of being one day shut out of God's presence into the great outer darkness, let us try to live in that gracious presence now.

II. *THE GLORY OF THE RIGHTEOUS.* 1. *Its time: when he shall come.* They suffer now; sometimes they are persecuted, their name is cast out as evil. But they have their consolation; they see indeed through a glass darkly, but yet they do see by faith the glory of the Lord; they are changed into the same image from glory to glory as by the Lord the Spirit. They have a glory now; but it is an inner spiritual

glory derived from the indwelling of the blessed Spirit whom the world seeth not, neither knoweth. Now they are the sons of God; when he shall appear, they shall be like him, for they shall see him as he is. 2. *Its nature: the unveiled presence of Christ.* He shall be glorified in his saints. "I am glorified in them," he said, when about to leave them. When he comes again, that glory shall shine forth in all its radiant splendour. He shall be admired in all them that believe. The glory of his presence abiding in them shall arouse the wondering admiration of all. The lost spirits will wonder; they will be amazed at the strangeness of the salvation of the blessed. "This is he" (Wisd. v. 3, 5) "whom we sometimes had in derision . . . how is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints?" The very angels will wonder at the exceeding glory of the Lord shining in his saints. For he will change the body of their humiliation, and make it like the body of his glory.

LESSONS. 1. We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; let us keep that awful day in our thoughts. 2. Think on the fearful misery of eternal separation from God; live in his presence now. 3. We hope to be like him in his glory; let us take up the cross.—B. C. C.

Vers. 11, 12.—*St. Paul's prayer for the Thessalonians.* I. ITS PURPORT. 1. *He prays that God's favour may rest upon them.* That he may count them worthy. We feel that we are all unworthy—unworthy of his grace and presence. We are not worthy that he, the blessed One, should enter under our roof, into our heart. But whom he loves, those he makes worthy of his love. He counts them worthy, though they are in themselves unworthy; his grace makes them worthy in Christ. He calls them; they through grace obey the calling. He calls them ever higher, nearer to himself, till they reach at length the prize of the high calling. 2. *That God who began the good work in them would complete it.* He prays (1) that God would fulfil in them every desire of goodness. He had used the same word of himself (Rom. x. 1): "My heart's desire and prayer for Israel is, that they might be saved." His heart's desire (*εὐδοκία*) was a good desire; it issued from goodness—goodness given by God, invrought into his heart by the working of the good Spirit of God. All holy desires come from God; he prompts them; they issue out of the goodness which comes from him, from his grace. He will fulfil such desires, for he has promised, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." The holy desire will issue, if we persevere in prayer, in the good counsel, in the just work. He prays (2) that God would fulfil the work of faith. In his First Epistle he spoke of his affectionate remembrance of their work of faith; now he prays that God might fulfil that work in power. Faith is itself a work, "the work of God"—a work which issues from God, from his grace; a work which is pleasing to God, for it is his will; a work which ends in God, in the contemplation of God, in the glory of God. And faith works; it is a living principle, an active energy. It will lead on to ever more earnest prayer, to a closer walk with God. And that prayer, that communion with God, will continually deepen and strengthen faith; for in answer to faithful prayer the Holy Spirit is given, and the Spirit is power—power from on high.

II. ITS FINAL END—THE GLORY OF GOD. 1. *That the Name of the Lord Jesus might be glorified in the Thessalonians.* That men might see their good works, and glorify the Lord that bought them, the Father that called them. We say in our daily prayers, "Hallowed be thy Name." We have been baptized into that great Name; that holy Name is upon us. Very weak and sinful as we are, that great Name may be hallowed, glorified in us, if we do all things, great or small, in the Name of the Lord Jesus; if we always give thanks to the Father by him; if we show in our daily walk before men the power of his grace. It is the great end of the Christian life. "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 2. *That they might be glorified in him.* His saints share his glory. "The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them." He dwelleth in them, and they in him. His glory is theirs, for they are his. "Ye are Christ's." And he is theirs. The Father gave the Son, the Son of God gave himself for us, to us. Hence it is that his true people, beholding (though now in a glass darkly) his glory, are changed into the same image from glory to glory. And that according to the grace of our God and Lord Jesus Christ. All our blessings come from his grace; he is our God, therefore we can trust in him. He is able to save to the uttermost, for he is

Almighty. He is our Lord Jesus Christ, therefore we may cast all our care upon him, for he will save us; he loveth us even to the end.

LESSONS. 1. Our salvation is of God; its beginning, course, end—all is of grace. 2. Every good desire comes from him; ask him to strengthen the desire, to develop it into action. 3. Seek power from him—power to fight the good fight of faith; and win the victory at last. 4. Let the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ be the one great aim above all other motives.—B. C. C.

Vers. 1—12.—*Manifestation of solemn interest. Address and salutation.* “Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy, unto the Church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ; Grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” The address is the same as in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, with the exception of the substitution of “*our Father*” for “*the Father*.” The salutation is also the same, with the addition of the twofold source from which grace and peace are invoked, which is the same as in many of Paul’s Epistles, with the exception of the substitution of “*the Father*” for “*our Father*.”

I. RECOGNITION OF THE SATISFACTORY CONDITION OF THE THESSALONIAN CHURCH.

1. *Before God.* “We are bound to give thanks to God alway for you, brethren, even as it is meet, for that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the love of each one of you all toward one another aboundeth.” We are to understand that information had reached Paul and his companions from Thessalonica since the despatch of their first letter to that place. It was information of faith and love on the part of the Thessalonian converts, of such a nature as to make Paul (taking him as representative) feel *inwardly* bound to thank God alway for them. This inward feeling answered to an *outward* fitness of circumstances. In the previous letter he had shown a deep interest in the perfecting of the lacking elements in their faith. We may think of a tree that has not come to its full proportions. It could now be said of them, after an interval of less than a year, that their faith was growing exceedingly. It was exhibiting such increase as a healthy faith always exhibits, and this in a marked degree. For such large realization of his wishes in the time it was only meet that he should thank God. He had also expressly prayed that the Lord would make them to abound in love one toward another. It could now be said that this was in the way of fulfilment. Their love was in process of enlargement as all love should be, and in a marked degree as the word would seem to imply. Their love was markedly *individual*. There was love toward the circle as a whole which was real and commendatory, but there was also personal attachment between the various members of the circle, individual toward individual. Their love was also markedly *universal* within the circle. The abounding was in the love of each one of *them all* toward one another. That testified to a harmonious circle. “When we love in part,” says Theophylact, “this is not love, but division. For if it is for God’s sake thou lovest, see that thou love all.” There is a symmetry in love which requires that, loving our heavenly Father, we should love all his children; that, loving Christ, we should love the whole Christian circle. In the Thessalonian circle no exception is made of the busybodies afterwards referred to as loved or loving. In being busybodies they were not doing their duty by the other members of the circle; but the obstacle thus presented to their brethren loving them was commendably surmounted. As for the love of the busybodies themselves, it was not sufficiently characterized by wisdom, and did, therefore, contain something to be subtracted. Still, his prayer had been in so large a degree answered that it was only meet that he should give thanks to God for them. What obstacles there are to our loving in the Christian circle let us try to surmount, and let us not ourselves present any obstacles. And let us be thankful before God for what harmony is enjoyed. 2. *Before the Churches.* “So that we ourselves glory in you in the Churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions which ye endure.” Formerly there was no need to say anything of their faith to God-ward. Their conversion to Christianity, with joyfulness in attendant persecution, was widely known. It was not now that others were behindhand; for they had warm friends, and these not a few, who gloried in them. But Paul and his companions were so overjoyed that they were moved to join with others in glorying in them. The sphere of glorying was the Churches of God, *i.e.* Corinth, from which this letter was written, and

other Churches with which they had correspondence. What they especially gloried in was the patience of the Thessalonians. Persecution had come upon them after persecution; they were then enduring afflictions. But they had nobly stood their ground. Their patience was sustained by faith—faith in a kind and wise Providence that was watching over them, that made use of their afflictions for the spread of the gospel, that would not leave them in the end unrewarded. This patience sustained by faith, Paul and his companions held up before the Churches for their encouragement in like circumstances. This being their motive, there was no breach of modesty in the instructors of the Thessalonians *themselves* glorying in them.

II. RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT OF GOD. 1. *With reference to the Thessalonians.* "Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God; to the end that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer." The patience sustained by faith, which was held up for the encouragement of the Churches, is now used for the encouragement of the Thessalonians themselves. Let them think of the judgment of God that was coming. That judgment would be righteous in dealing with men according to character. The character they possessed left no doubt as to what the righteous judgment of God would be. It looked forward to their being in the end counted worthy of the kingdom of God. For that kingdom they were suffering; but let them know that they who thus suffered would also reign. 2. *With reference to their persecutors.* "If so be that it is a righteous thing with God to recompense affliction to them that afflict you, and to you that are afflicted rest with us." The persecutors had no source of encouragement in their character. They also had to pass under the judgment of God; but what could righteous judgment mean to them? Their character was that of cruelly afflicting God's people. Could it be a righteous thing with God to place them alongside of patient sufferers as worthy of the kingdom? That would be to have no regard to distinction in character, to make God the friend of cruelty as much as of patience, and in that way to contradict the very idea of righteous judgment. The incontestably righteous thing could only be that with what measure they meted it should be measured unto them; that, giving affliction, there should be given back to them affliction; while, to the afflicted Thessalonians, the righteous opposite would be release from the strain of affliction—release in company with Paul and Silas and Timothy in like manner afflicted.

III. JUDICIAL PROCEDURE UNDER WHICH DEALING WITH THE THESSALONIANS AND THEIR PERSECUTORS FALLS. 1. *Toward the ungodly.* (1) *Judge and time of judgment.* "At the revelation of the Lord Jesus." The righteous judgment of God is now associated, as in other Scriptures, with the Second Person of the Godhead. It is as Jesus, or Saviour, that he is to fill the lordly office, and to exercise the lordly prerogatives of Judge. He is now concealed from human view, upon which the ungodly presume. But one day he shall appear upon this earthly scene, and not in the lowly form in which he before appeared, but in a form that shall mark his Divine sovereignty. (2) *Place from which revealed.* "From heaven." When before he appeared there was no impression of his coming from heaven. He was born upon this earth; he wore the earthly form of our humanity until, having made atonement for our sin, he ascended into heaven and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. The heaven which then opened to receive him will again open, that he may reveal himself on earth for judgment. It will be observed that this revelation from heaven is identical with the descent from heaven described in 1 Thessalonians. (3) *Manner of revelation.* *First circumstance.* "With the angels of his power." In the former description the Lord appeared, attended by the archangel and (by implication) his angelic host. The old translation here is "mighty angels." Their attendance, as of an army upon an earthly sovereign, is intended to give an impression of his power. This they give by their numbers; they may also give it by the personal might, more than human, with which they are endowed. *Second circumstance.* "In flaming fire." In the former description it is the clouds that are mentioned. Here the Lord appears encircled with a flame of fire. The clouds conceal and moderate for the saints that have been acknowledged. The uncreated splendour displayed before men in view of judgment is as fire. In 1 Cor. iii. 13 fire is associated with judgment: "Each man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it is revealed by fire; and the fire itself shall prove each man's work of what sort it is." As separating from it all impurity,

this judicial fire must have a fearful aspect to the ungodly. The description here bears a close resemblance to what is found in Dan. vii. 9, 10: "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened." The description is here transferred from the Ancient of days to him who is there styled the Son of man.

(4) *Judicial action toward two classes of the ungodly.* "Rendering vengeance." Judgment is the manifestation of the justice of God. When men are convicted before a human tribunal they have to give an equivalent for the wrong they have done to others. Society in that way not only protects itself, but expresses its indignation against their crimes. The Lord is to take his seat as Judge, first convicting and then pronouncing sentence. In this there is implied no revengeful feeling; but there is implied holy indignation, in the name of the highest Authority in the universe, against all the ungodly for all their works of ungodliness which they have ungodly wrought.

First class of the ungodly. "To them that know not God." This is a description of the heathen. And it is to be noticed that vengeance is to be rendered not merely to the wicked world-rulers (Pharaohs and Neros), to those who have traded in their fellow-men, to those who have been covenant-breakers, to those who have taken away the life of the innocent, but to the heathen as a whole. On the other hand, it is to be noticed that they are not regarded historically, but from the point of view of the writers as those who have had to do with their not knowing God. In so far, therefore, as it can be justly said that, from their bad environments, they have not had to do with this not knowing God, vengeance shall not be rendered to them. But, in so far as they have not followed their light, there shall not any of them escape.

Second class of the ungodly. "And to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus." Our Lord Jesus is identified with gospel as well as with Law, with mercy as well as with judgment. What is the gospel but the good news of the Son of God coming into our nature, and suffering vengeance, just indignation and death, in room of the transgressors? And when he comes forward now in the ministration of the gospel, and commands men everywhere to repent of their sins and to accept of mercy, has he not a right to be obeyed? And will the most humanitarian maintain that he who obeys not should go unpunished?

(5) *Their punishment in its contents.* "Who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might." Such being their character (as "who" implies), they shall suffer punishment. The suffering of punishment by them corresponds to the rendering of vengeance by the Lord. The punishment is declared to be destructive. This may mean, and in some of its applications does mean, annihilation. But there is not good reason for supposing that it means annihilation in its application to the punishment of the ungodly. It seems to involve a low conception of the nature of man and of the moral government of God, to suppose that human beings are to be placed under trial, and to work out a moral history, and that after their failure they are in multitudes to be quenched in the darkness of non-existence. It seems more reasonable to take the meaning to be that they shall be destroyed, in being consigned to a state of misery for which in their creation they were not intended. Their nature (unlike that of Christ's people, 1 Thess. iv. 23) being disintegrated by sin, their peace shall be completely broken. The epithet "eternal" which is applied to destruction is of terrible import. It points to the punishment as stretching away into the eternal world. It may be doubted whether by itself it is decisive for the absolute eternity of future punishment. It is not so decisive as if the form had been endless. On the other hand, it is not decisive against the endlessness of future punishment that the word means age-long. It needs to be considered in connection with the subjects to which it is applied. Eternal sin, as the right reading now is in Mark iii. 29, apparently means sin for which there is no escape from punishment. Eternal punishment does not mean sin for which there is no proceeding, but that its issues reach into eternity. The similar word which in the Old Testament is applied to the mountains from the nature of the case imports a limited eternity. The eternal times through which the mystery was hidden can only mean limited times into which the past eternity was regarded as divided. Applied to God,

as the word is in the same sentence at the close of Romans, it indicates the absolute eternity of God. Applied to life, as it very frequently is, from the nature of life and from the Divine guarantee, it means life that is endless and, as it is expressed in one place, indissoluble. It still remains a question whether, from the nature of spiritual death and from the character of God along with other teachings, destruction is to be regarded as eternal in the sense of being endless. It certainly is a word which is fitted to strike terror into the ungodly. The destruction is further represented as the greatest of all deprivations. It is to be away from the face of the Lord. The supreme pleasure of Christ's people is to be their beholding his face of infinite benignity turned toward them. "As for me," says the psalmist, "I will behold thy face in righteousness." "And they shall see his face," it is said in the last chapter of Revelation. So the bitterest element in the case of the ungodly will be that no look of love, no look of the infinite benignity of the Saviour, will be turned toward them. As the earth without sunshine, so must it be to be away from the face of Christ. It is also to be away from his glory. Three disciples were taken up to the Mount of Transfiguration to see his glory. He also encouraged the eleven at the last by the prospect of their seeing his glory. "That where I am they also may be with me, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." It is particularly here the glory of his might. He who has the look of infinite benignity gives also in his appearance the impression of infinite might. How glorious a Being to be privileged, without fear, yet with solemn awe, to look upon! To be eternally destroyed, then, from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might, such will be the terrible punishment awarded to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 2. *Toward the saints.* "When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and be marvelled at in all them that believed (because our testimony unto you was believed) in that day." Contemporaneous with his judicial action toward the ungodly, is to be his judicial action toward his own. They are here called his saints, answering perfectly to that description then as they only imperfectly do now. As his saints, they shall be acknowledged on the day of judgment; and their reward shall be to have their outward condition brought into perfect correspondence with their inward character. This is called their *glorification*. The Lord, having given grace, will also give glory. We may think of the glory as the blossoming forth of the grace. As the flower comes to beauty of form, so they shall be made beautiful to look upon in their higher order of being. Their glorification is here presented under the special aspect of the glorification of Christ in them. As Judge, he is to carry out his own word. "And the glory which thou hast given me I have given unto them." As he is in them as the source of their holiness, so is his beauty to shine forth in their outward form. From heaven we "wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself." This glorification of Christ in the saints shall call forth the wonder of the assembled universe. They shall marvel at the infinite benignity and power of him who out of darkness has made light, who upon rebels against his Father's authority has stamped his own glorious image. In connection with the marvelling, is brought in the condition of our future glorification. With a look back from judgment it is said, "in all them that believed." And believing is taken up and connected particularly with the Thessalonians—"because our testimony unto you was believed." In keeping with this language, faith is defined by Bishop Pearson "as an assent unto truths credible upon the testimony of God delivered unto us by the apostles and prophets." Let us give cordial assent to the facts and truths of the gospel, which we have upon the best of testimony, that we may not come short of the glorification which shall be the marvel of the universe. There was not needed further predication of time, but it is emphasized by the addition of the words, "in that day." The day when the Lord is to render vengeance to the ungodly, that is to be the day when he is to be glorified in his saints, and to be marvelled at in all them that believed.

IV. PRAYER IN CONNECTION WITH THE GLORIFICATION OF THE THESSALONIANS. "To which end we also pray always for you, that our God may count you worthy of your calling, and fulfil every desire of goodness and every work of faith, with power; that the Name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ." Toward their glorification the wishes,

and not only the wishes but the prayers also, of Paul and his companions were directed, and always directed. As believing, God was calling them to glory. Our God, say the petitioners, grant to the Thessalonians at the last to be counted worthy of their calling. For this end let power sufficient be granted to bring to completion every inward desire and the outward work appointed them. They had aspirations after goodness; let these receive fulfilment. They had a life to live before the world according to the faith by which they were actuated; let it be as a finished piece of work. Thus, having real excellence, would they be adjudged worthy of glory. The final end of their glorification is emphasized by repetition, with some modification of form. There is brought in "the Name of our Lord Jesus," i.e. as he is revealed to men as Saviour, exalted to sovereignty. And, as they are to be the element in which his Name is to be glorified, so reciprocally is he to be the element in which they are to find their glorification. Thus is identification with Christ in glory made clear as clear can be. This final end of glorification is looked for in prayer on behalf of the Thessalonians, not according to their deservings, but, say the petitioners, according to the grace (undeserved and rich) of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ (in his superabundant merits).—R. F.

Ver. 2.—*Grace and peace.* St. Paul opens his Second Epistle with the expression of the same good wishes which he expressed in his earlier Epistle. There is no need of a spiritual parsimony for reserving highest benedictions. The best can be breathed freely, because there is no end to the resources of God. But we need not fear to repeat them, inasmuch as they are always suitable to Christian needs. Though we may tire of the words, "grace and peace," and shall do so if we do not enter into the spirit of them, we can never tire of the things themselves, for they are large as the universe and fresh as eternity. Grace and peace represent the origin and the perfection, the foundation and the pinnacle, the root and the fruit, of Christian prosperity. It begins in grace and rests on grace and draws its supplies from grace; it grows into round, ripe fulness in peace.

I. GRACE IS THE SOURCE OF CHRISTIAN PROSPERITY. 1. *Christian grace is essentially God's free favour.* This is the first characteristic of the new covenant. It starts with mercy to the sinner; it continues with grace to the saint. It is beyond nature which leaves us to our own devices, and law which directs but does not aid, and justice which rewards according to our works, because it offers its blessings to the undeserving "without money and without price." Grace is the key-note of the anthem of the Bethlehem angels. 2. *Christian grace is an active energy of God.* It is not the bare negative mercy that lets off penalties, that withholds the hand of justice from striking the blow of doom. Nor is it only a kindly disposition. It is the highest Divine energy and the most vigorous fruitful activity. God works upon us in grace. 3. *Christian grace works through the whole of the Christian life.* We do not simply depend upon God's grace for the pardon of our sins and the renewal of our hearts at the commencement of our better life. We continue to live upon grace. It begins by delivering us from our Egyptian bondage; it continues by supplying our daily bread. Christians would as surely perish without these supplies of grace, even after the first forgiving act of salvation, as the Israelites would have perished without the manna even after they had crossed the Red Sea.

II. PEACE IS THE CROWN OF CHRISTIAN PROSPERITY. 1. *Peace is the first interest of a nation, a Church, a soul.* We cannot enjoy wealth, pleasure, or comfort if we have not peace. For peace we pine and yearn. 2. *Peace is the most perfect of blessings.* When this is rich and full we want little else. We can afford to suffer if we bear our lot with interior peace. It may be said of peace, as it is said of love, it "suffereth long." 3. *Peace is the greatest outcome of grace.* It cannot be had without grace. Grace restores us to peaceable relations with God, gives us peaceable dispositions to bear and forbear one with another, and breathes into us a spirit of content, submission, and holy calm. We may advance far in activity, etc., before we gain this precious gem of grace. Inward serenity in all weathers of outward circumstance is the last product of spiritual culture.

III. GRACE AND PEACE ARE ENJOYED THROUGH OUR UNION WITH GOD AND CHRIST. The twofold benediction has a twofold reference. 1. *Grace originates in the Father.* The first thought of redeeming the world arose in the bosom of God. The secret of

these wonderful blessings is a Father's love. 2. *Peace is found in union with God.* We enjoy the peace that is never absent from the Spirit of God when we approach his holy, serene presence. 3. *Both are received by us through Christ.* He is 'the incarnation of God's grace. He makes a way by his sacrifice for us to enjoy it. He is also "our peace." When we learn the "secret of Jesus" we shall have the peace of God which passeth all understanding.—W. F. A.

Ver. 3.—*Growing faith.* In his former Epistle St. Paul congratulated the Thessalonians on the fruits of faith, love, and hope which he saw among them (1 Thess. i. 3), and he prayed for the increase of their love (1 Thess. iii. 12). Now he is thankful that their faith continues to grow, and that their mutual affection is full and overflowing. Let us consider the first of these two signs of progress. (For the "increase of love," see on 1 Thess. iii. 12.)

I. THE SIGNS OF GROWING FAITH. Faith is an invisible spiritual grace. How, then, did St. Paul know that it was increasing in the distant Church of the Thessalonians? We need not suppose that he possessed any supernatural insight for reading the hearts of men. If faith grows the fruits of faith grow. A feeble faith makes a feeble life. When the whole heart is faint the whole head is sick (Isa. i. 5). Faith is always known by its works, and the health and vigour and stature of faith by the character and measure of Christian activity. Note some of the signs of growing faith. 1. *Brighter cheerfulness.* We are less distressed with doubt, have little torment of fear, bear present ills patiently, when we trust the goodness of God more fully. 2. *Deeper devotion.* Slight faith means cold prayer. We are near to God just in proportion as we have faith in him. 3. *Fuller activity.* We work half-heartily when we believe half-heartedly. A strong trust in the grace of God gives a strong energy for doing the work of God. 4. *Warmer love.* Faith worketh by love (Gal. v. 6). When we trust Christ more truly we feel the force of his love more deeply and love him more warmly in return, and then our love to Christ shows itself in love of the brethren.

II. THE SECRET OF GROWING FAITH. Faith flows from the grace of God. It is a gift of God (Eph. ii. 8). Nevertheless, God is always willing to bestow this gift, and our reception of it depends on what we do. Faith will not grow without cultivation. Two most important truths, too often ignored, help us to the secret. 1. *Faith grows by means of what it feeds on.* This is in harmony with a law of all growth. Nothing can come from nothing. If a child is not fed it will die, certainly it will not grow. Growing plants take nourishment from air and soil. Faith will not grow by our wishing it to grow, nor by any manipulation with it. Yet people, so to speak, take out their faith and try to do something with it in order to improve it. The great mistake is to think of increasing our faith by any consideration of the faith itself. We must forget our faith and look at Christ, and then our faith will grow unconsciously. We have too much introspection. An intelligent consideration of the grounds of faith, especially a study of Christ, reading of Scripture, prayer, "means of grace," etc., help faith to grow. 2. *Faith grows by exercise.* This is also natural. Children need exercise that their bodies may grow. Unused limbs shrink and shrivel up. The arm of the blacksmith is strong with work. The intellect grows by being employed. The torpid intellect becomes stupid. So faith must be used in order that it may grow. Instead of deploring our little faith, let us use it and it will grow larger. This is Christ's own advice; for when his disciples said, "Lord, increase our faith," instead of doing as they wished by a miracle, he almost rebuked them by saying that if they had faith as small as a grain of mustard seed, even that when fully exercised would be enough to remove a mountain; and, like the seed which is a living thing, it would grow when planted. It is as foolish not to use our faith because it is small as it would be not to plant the seed for a similar reason. Thus we keep faith small. It must be employed if it is to grow.—W. F. A.

Ver. 5.—*A token of righteous judgment.* St. Paul regards the patient endurance of persecution by the Thessalonian Christians as "a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God." Here is one of those paradoxes of triumphant faith in which the apostle delighted. To the superficial observer the aspect of affairs told the very opposite story to that which St. Paul read in it. Good men were persecuted, and they bore

their persecution patiently; yet nothing was done for their redress. Was not this a break-down of justice? The case is like that of the psalmist, who was perplexed at the prosperity of the wicked till he went into the sanctuary, and then, by faith and the knowledge of unseen Divine law, understood their end (Ps. lxxiii. 17). His faith in the supremacy and justice of God leads the apostle to put the contrary construction on passing events to that which would be laid upon them by unbelief.

I. THE PATIENT ENDURANCE OF PERSECUTION IS A TOKEN OF GOD'S COMING JUDGMENT OF REWARD. The judgment has two sides. There are sheep as well as goats. To those who groan under the yoke of present injustice the coming of a future judgment must be hailed with joy. Then the cruelty will cease, the calumny will be repudiated, the wrong will be righted. But how is the patient endurance of persecution a token of the coming judgment? 1. *It shows the necessity of it.* Of course, this argument is only addressed to faith. If we believe in God and his righteousness we cannot suppose that he will permit wrongs to remain unredressed. If justice were done on earth we need expect no further rectification. But the postponement of justice makes the future coming of it certain. Here is a reason for looking forward to a future life. If this life were rounded into perfection we should not have so much occasion for expecting another life. But now that it is broken and not justly completed there must be a future. If the wages of God's labourers are not paid to-day there must be a morrow when they will be paid. 2. *It permits the persecuted to look forward to a happy issue from it.* They will not be counted worthy of the kingdom of God simply because they endure persecution. Suffering is not merit. Heaven is not bare compensation. But the patient endurance is a sign of character, and it reveals a fitness for the future award of blessings. The untried may be uncertain of their fate. The tried and faithful have reason for more confidence.

II. THE UNAVENGED INFLICTION OF PERSECUTION IS A TOKEN OF GOD'S COMING JUDGMENT OF PUNISHMENT. The blood of Abel cries to God from the ground. The meek, patient endurance of the martyr demands future retribution more powerfully than the loudest cry for vengeance. The better the character of the persecuted is, the less they deserve their ill treatment and the more patiently they bear it, the greater will the guilt of the persecutors appear. Thus this condition of affairs is a token of a coming judgment of wrath. 1. *It shows the necessity of it.* If justice were already done, guilty men might have some excuse for denying the probability of a future judgment. But now they cannot speak of it as an idle threat of the Church. Justice demands it. 2. *It warns the wicked to expect a dreadful doom.* It reveals the guilt of their sin; and it makes so glaringly apparent the contrast between their conduct and that of their victims that a difference of destiny of corresponding magnitude may be expected.—W. F. A.

Vers. 6—10.—*The judgment-day.* This vivid description of the judgment-day begins with an appeal to the justice of its awful events: "If so be that it is a righteous thing," etc. The details of the great day can only be revealed by Divine inspiration. But the great outlines of its proceedings may be predicted by our own consciences.

I. THE SEPARATION OF DESTINIES. Destinies are now apparently mixed and disarranged without any evident regard to justice. They will not be so then. There will be a clear division between the sheep and the goats. 1. *Suffering to the persecutors.* They who give affliction shall suffer affliction. There is a law of nature as well as a principle of fairness in the *lex talionis* when it is rightly applied. A bad man's doom is to be the recoil of his evil deeds upon his own head. 2. *Rest to the persecuted.* The specially coveted reward of the afflicted is rest. To the weary sufferer that alone is an immeasurable blessing. There is some compensation in the fact that rest, which to the idle and comfortable is itself a weariness, becomes the most happy solace to the suffering. Note: (1) This rest is the more enjoyable because it is shared with beloved friends (Paul, Silas, etc). (2) It is not given to all the afflicted, but to afflicted Christians.

II. THE TIME OF THE JUDGMENT. It is here synchronized with the second advent of Christ. He is King and Judge as well as Friend and Saviour. His repudiation of the office of Judge during his earthly humiliation (Luke xii. 14) should only make us feel how surely the exercise of his rightful judicial functions must be reserved for some

future occasion. Jesus Christ cannot endure eternal injustice. He is strong to execute as well as righteous to desire judgment.

III. THE PERSONS CONDEMNED. Two classes are named. 1. *Those who are ignorant of God.* The heathen world seems to be here referred to. Why should these heathen people be punished for their ignorance? Because they might have known God (Rom. 1. 18—20). But they can only be punished in so far as their ignorance was wilful and came from moral causes, *i.e.* in so far as they "held down the truth in unrighteousness." Doubtless there have been good heathen men who have not committed that offence. 2. *Those who obey not the gospel.* People of Christendom are now referred to. It is of no use to live in a Christian nation, nor to belong to a Christian Church, nor to believe in the truths of the gospel, if we do not obey the gospel. Obedience is the one test. Heathen are only condemned for wilful neglect of God, Christian nations for disobedience to the Christian gospel.

IV. THE DOOM OF THE GUILTY. 1. *They are to suffer punishment.* Their doom will not be purely privative, nor will merely natural consequences follow their evil conduct. Distinct penalties will be imposed. 2. *The punishment will chiefly consist in "eternal destruction."* This dreadful phrase certainly cannot be taken as an equivalent for everlasting torment. Is not sin everywhere destructive? The wages of sin is not pain—though pain does follow it—but death. This destroying process, left to itself, will go on for ever. All hope of a far-off end to it must be in some interference with its action by the Divine mercy, which is also eternal. 3. *The punishment will be increased by the measure of the glory that is missed.* The eternal destruction involves separation "from the face of the Lord." In his presence there is fulness of joy. Spiritual destruction includes the killing out of the spiritual eye that beholds the beatific vision.—W. F. A.

Ver. 11.—*Worthy of the Christian calling.* Here is a prayer with two aspects. It looks to heaven and to earth. It is concerned with God's estimate of his people and with their own spiritual successes.

I. THE HEAVENWARD ASPECT OF THE PRAYER. St. Paul has just been describing the great and terrible judgment-day in language of fire and thunder. Now he expresses his anxiety that all may be well with his readers on that day, when they will be called to account to ascertain how far they have walked worthily in respect of their vocation. 1. *Christians have a calling.* We are called to be Christians, and being Christians, to enter the pilgrimage of the heavenly life. The object of this general calling is to follow Christ. But we are also each of us called to some specific individual vocation. 2. *The Christian calling involves high obligations.* It is no light matter to be found worthy of it. When a great trust is put upon a man a heavy responsibility accompanies his discharge thereof. So is it with every Christian. 3. *God watches us in the pursuit of our calling.* We are observed of God, neither escaping his eye in our most secret hours, nor disregarded by him in our least important actions. 4. *God will bring us to account for our fulfilment of our calling.* It is most important that he should reckon us to have worthily discharged our vocation because "his favour is life." But he who calls us to the Christian life can give us grace to discharge its obligations. We can pray that we may be accounted worthy.

II. THE EARTHWARD ASPECT OF THE PRAYER. 1. It seeks the fulfilment of *every desire of goodness.* These are the desires which spring out of the good disposition of a Christian heart. (1) It is not every desire of a good man that is to be fulfilled. Good people may have foolish wishes. The desires to be prayed about are those which spring directly out of goodness. (2) Good desires may be unsatisfied. We may wish well and not have opportunity or power for executing our wishes. The spirit may be willing while the flesh is weak, or the spirit may be weak in energy while it is good in intention. 2. It seeks the fulfilment of *every work of faith.* St. Paul agrees with St. James that faith shows itself by works. But he sees deeper into the difficulties of weak human nature. Though our trust and fidelity prompt us to obedient service, innumerable hindrances intervene and frustrate our energies. We need that God should establish the work of our hands. Even when we sow and water well he must give the increase. 3. The accomplishment of these ends depends on a *gift of power.* Goodness without strength is futile. But the strong God infuses strength (Ps. lxxiii.

26). The Holy Spirit is a Spirit of power. The Church should pray more earnestly for the grace of energy.—W. F. A.

Ver. 12.—*Glorified*. I. THE GREAT END OF THE CHRISTIAN VOCATION IS TO GLORIFY THE NAME OF CHRIST. The blessings for which St. Paul has been praying are to lead up to this great result. 1. *The Christian lives for Christ*. Christ is the chief Cornerstone of the finished temple as well as the Foundation with which the building is begun. He is the Omega as well as the Alpha. We begin with him; in him, too, we end. Receiving all our grace from Christ, we are to devote our lives to him. 2. *The Christian lives for the glory of Christ*. We cannot minister to his wants directly as did those women who gave of their substance during his earthly humiliation—though we can do so virtually when we give to his brethren. But we can minister to his glory as directly as did those disciples who cast their garments in his path and hailed his entrance into Jerusalem with shouts of praise. 3. *The Christian honours Christ by glorifying his Name*. The Name is not merely the distinctive appellation, but the descriptive characteristic. To Jesus there is given “the Name which is above every name” (Phil. ii. 9). His Name is what is known of him and praised in him, *i.e.* his fame. So we speak of one making a name. We cannot add to the greatness and gloriousness of our Lord. But we can make his fame to be more widely spread and more highly exalted among men.

II. WHEN THE NAME OF CHRIST IS GLORIFIED HIS PEOPLE SHARE THE GLORY. 1. *There is a prospect of glorification for Christians*. The doleful plaint of the despised sufferer is not to be the only song of the Church. Not only will joy follow sorrow, but exaltation will succeed humiliation. The Thessalonian Christians were a despised and persecuted community living among cruel, scornful neighbours. This trying condition was not to be permanent. For their shame they would have double glory in the end. 2. *Christian glorification follows the glorification of Christ*. The first point is the glorifying of our God’s Name; that of his people comes second. The order is significant. (1) We must not seek our own glory, but in seeking Christ’s ours will follow unsought. (2) Until the master is glorified the servants must remain in obscurity. The great glory of the second advent will be followed by the exaltation of the Church. 3. *Christian glorification depends on union with Christ*. We are to be glorified in him. (1) All that makes the Christian glorious comes from Christ. Without him we are shamed and dark and dead. (2) Glory comes to us through our sharing Christ’s glory, as the clouds are glorified in the light of the rising sun.

III. THE GLORIFICATION OF CHRIST AND HIS PEOPLE ARISES FROM A WORTHY FULFILMENT OF THE CHRISTIAN CALLING ACCORDING TO DIVINE GRACE. 1. *It arises from a worthy fulfilment of the Christian calling*. St. Paul prayed that God would count his people worthy of their calling for this express purpose, that they might glorify Christ, etc. (ver. 11). We glorify Christ by our lives. Songs of praise go for little if our conduct dishonours our Lord. The richest anthem of praise rises from the silent living of a pure and useful Christian life. Our own glory is also only possible when our life in Christ has been fruitful. 2. *It depends on Divine grace*. It is “according to the grace,” etc., *i.e.* the glory corresponds to the grace. The more grace we have the greater will be the glory. Fulness of grace brings fulness of glory.—W. F. A.

EXPOSITION.

CHAPTER II.

CONTENTS.—The apostle now proceeds to the principal object which he had in view in writing this Epistle. The Thessalonians had adopted erroneous notions concerning the advent; they supposed that the day of the Lord was imminent, and, in consequence of this belief, they were thrown into a state

of excitement and alarm. The apostle reminds them of his former instructions on this subject; how he had told them that before the coming of the day of the Lord there should be a great apostasy, and the man of sin, whose nature and characteristics he had described to them, should be revealed; but that at present there was a restraining influence which prevented his appearance.

When that restraining influence was removed, the man of sin would be revealed, accompanied with powers and signs and wonders of falsehood, and would succeed in deceiving those who were destitute of the love of the truth. Then would the Lord Jesus Christ come and destroy him by the breath of his mouth and the appearance of his presence. The apostle thanks God that the Thessalonians, on the contrary, were chosen to salvation and to a participation of the glory of the Lord; he exhorts them to stand fast in the instructions which he had delivered them; and he concludes with a prayer for their consolation and confirmation.

This chapter is involved in difficulties; it is the obscurest passage in the writings of Paul; it is pre-eminently one of those things in his Epistles which are hard to be understood (2 Pet. iii. 16). But it is to be observed that the description of the man of sin, though obscure to us, was not necessarily obscure to the Thessalonians. They had information on this point which we do not possess. The apostle, when at Thessalonica, had instructed them in this subject, and to these instructions he refers in the description which he here gives (vers. 5, 6). Nor was the information which he imparted to them indefinite and general, but definite and precise. He had described the nature of the apostasy, the characteristics of the man of sin, and the influences which retarded his manifestation (vers. 3, 4); and if these points were known to us, as they were to the Thessalonians, most of the obscurity which rests on this prediction would disappear. At present we give the exposition of the passage, reserving the discussion of the various theories concerning its interpretation to an excursus at the end of the chapter.

Ver. 1.—*Now*; literally, *but*; a particle of transition. *We beseech you*. Passing from what he besought God for them to what he beseeches them. *Brethren, by*. Considered by some, as in the A.V., as a form of adjuration. Thus Calvin: "He adjures believers by the coming of Christ; for it is customary to adjure by those things which are regarded by us with reverence." But such a construction is unknown in the New Testament, and is besides unnatural. Others render the preposition "in behalf of" or "in the interest of," "as though he were pleading, in honour of that day, that the expectation

of it might not be a source of disorder in the Church" (Jowett); but such a sense is too artificial. It is best to render it "concerning," or, as in the R.V., "touching." The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some (Whitby, Hammond) suppose that by the coming of the Lord Jesus was here meant his coming in spirit at the destruction of Jerusalem, and that the apostasy was the revolt of the Jews from the Romans; the restraining power being differently interpreted. But this is a forced and extravagant interpretation, and is completely overthrown by what the apostle says in the next verse, for the destruction of Jerusalem was imminent. Besides, the Thessalonians, who were chiefly Gentile converts, were too distant from Jerusalem to be much troubled by the destruction of that city. By the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, then, is here meant, as is the uniform meaning of the phrase in the writings of Paul, the second advent. And by (or, *concerning*) our gathering together unto him. The word translated "gathering together" occurs only once again in the New Testament, where it is used with reference to the assembling of Christians for worship (Heb. x. 35). Here it is used with reference to the assembling of believers to Christ, when he shall be revealed from heaven; it refers, not to the raising of the dead, but to the gathering together of those who are then alive (see 1 Thess. iv. 17).

Ver. 2.—*That*; to the end that, the purpose for which the apostle besought the Thessalonians. *Ye be not soon*; *quickly*. This has been variously interpreted, "so soon after my exhortation," or "so soon after my departure from Thessalonica," or "so soon after your reception of the gospel," or "so soon after this opinion of the imminence of Christ's coming was promulgated." Others refer it to manner rather than to time—"soon and with small reason" (Alford). *Shaken*; agitated like the waves by a storm, as the word signifies. *In mind*; or rather, *from your mind*; *from your sober reason*. Or be troubled; a still stronger expression; "terrified." *Neither by spirit*; not any falsely understood prophecies of the Old Testament, nor any mistaken revelations, whether by visions or dreams; but prophetic discourses delivered by members of the Church in a state of excitement, announcing the immediate coming of Christ, and which were mistaken for Divine communications. There does not appear to have been any intention to deceive; the Thessalonians erred in neglecting "to try the spirits" and to "prove the prophecies." Nor by word; not any traditional word of Christ, nor any misinterpretation of his prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, nor a calm discourse in distinction from prophetic utterances; but the



report of some of the apostle's words, either erroneous or misunderstood. Nor by letter. Not the apostle's former Epistle to the Thessalonians, the passages in which concerning the advent had been misinterpreted (Paley); for, if this were the case, the apostle would have expressed himself more plainly and would not have repudiated it; but some letter, either forged in the apostle's name or pretending to inculcate his views. As from us. These words apply to the last two particulars: "Let no pretended saying or pretended letter of mine disturb you in this matter." As that—to the effect that—the day of Christ; or, as the best manuscripts read, *of the Lord*. Is at hand; literally, *is present*, so R.V. The verb is so translated in the other passages where it occurs (Rom. viii. 38; 1 Cor. iii. 22; Gal. i. 4; Heb. ix. 9), except in 2 Tim. iii. 1, where it ought also to have been so rendered. It is, however, difficult to conceive how the Thessalonians could think that the day of the Lord was actually present. We cannot imagine that they thought that Christ had already come for judgment. To escape the difficulty, some conceive that "the day of the Lord" is not identical with "the coming of the Lord," but that, besides the actual advent, it includes the events which are its antecedents and concomitants (Eadie). It appears, however, best to suppose that the word is a strong expression for the imminence of that day; that the hour of the advent was about to strike. The Thessalonians ought always to be living in a state of preparation for the day of the Lord, as that day would come suddenly and unexpectedly; but they were not to be so impressed with a sense of its immediateness as to be deprived of their sober reason.

Ver. 3.—Let no man deceive you by any means; in any way, not only in any of the foregoing methods, "by spirit, or word, or letter," but in any way whatever. For (*that day shall not come*). The bracketed words are not in the original, but are correctly supplied for the completion of the sense. Except there come a falling away; or, *the apostasy*; namely, that apostasy about which the apostle, when in Thessalonica, had instructed his readers. The falling away here alluded to is evidently religious, not political. Hence it cannot be the revolt of the Jews from the Romans, or any of those revolts and disturbances which then occurred in the political world. Nor must we conceive that the man of sin himself is here meant; for this apostasy precedes his coming—prepares the way for his advent; it is not the result, but the cause, of his appearance. The word, then, is to be taken generally to denote that remarkable "falling away" from Christianity concerning which

Paul had instructed the Thessalonians (comp. 1 Tim. iv. 1—3). First; namely, before the coming of the day of the Lord. And that man of sin; in whom sin is, as it were, personified, as righteousness is in Christ. Be revealed. The apostle considers the man of sin as the counterpart of Christ; as Christ was revealed, so shall the man of sin be revealed. The son of perdition; whose sin necessarily conducts to perdition; not here the perdition of his followers, but his own perdition. The same name which was applied by our Lord to Judas Iscariot (John xvii. 12).

Ver. 4.—Who opposeth; or, *the opposer*, taken substantively. The object of opposition is not so much believers, as Christ; he is antichrist, the opponent of Christ. And yet antichrist is not Satan, the great adversary (1 Pet. v. 8; Rev. xii. 10), for he is expressly distinguished from him (ch. ii. 9), but the instrument of Satan. As Satan entered into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of perdition, so does he take possession of the man of sin. And exalteth himself above; or rather, *against*, in a hostile manner. All that is called God: not only against all the false gods of the heathen, but also against the true God (comp. Dan. vii. 25; xi. 36). Or that is worshipped; that is an object of worship. The same word that is used in Acts xvii. 23, "As I passed by and beheld your devotions"—the objects of your worship. So that he as God. The words "as God" are to be omitted, as not found in the best manuscripts. Sitteth in the temple of God. According to some, the temple of Jerusalem (De Wette, Lünemann, Eadie), either as it then existed or as restored according to the prophecy of Ezekiel. But it appears more correct to refer the expression metaphorically to the Christian Church. It is a favourite metaphor of Paul to compare believers in particular, or the Church in general, to the temple of God (comp. 1 Cor. iii. 17; vi. 19; Eph. ii. 20—22). Showing—exhibiting—himself that he is God. His sitting in the temple of God was an assertion of his divinity; he claimed to be regarded and worshipped as God. This was the crowning act of his impiety; not only, like the Roman emperors, he demanded to be worshipped as one of many gods, but he claimed to himself the prerogative of the Godhead, not only to the exclusion of the false gods of heathenism, but even of the true God.

Ver. 5.—Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? These words contain a reproach. Had the Thessalonians remembered the instructions of the apostle, they would not have been so soon shaken from their sober reason or troubled. The apostle, when he was in

Thessalonica, had told them of these things; he had instructed them concerning the nature of the apostasy and the coming of the man of sin; so that, as already observed, this description, so obscure to us, was not obscure to the Thessalonians,—they possessed the key to its interpretation.

Ver. 6.—*And now.* The particle “now” has been variously interpreted. Some connect it with the restraining influence: “And ye know what now withholdeth;” but if so, there would have been a different arrangement of the words in the original. Others consider it as a mere particle of transition: “Now, to pass over to another subject;” but there is no transition, the apostle continues his description of the man of sin. It is rather to be considered as a particle of time: “Now ye know, because ye have been instructed on this point.” *Ye know;* Paul having told them when he was at Thessalonica. *What withholdeth; hindereth.* The hindrance does not refer to the prevention of the apostle from speaking freely on this subject, lest he should involve himself in political difficulties; nor to any delay in the coming of Christ; but to a restraint upon the appearance of the man of sin: “Ye know what prevents his open manifestation.” *That he;* namely, the man of sin. *Might be revealed in his time;* literally, *in his season;* in his proper time, the time appointed by God. Events were not yet ripe for his appearance. Just as there was a “fulness of time” when Christ should appear (Gal. iv. 4), so there was a “fulness of time” when the man of sin should be revealed; there was a series of events going on which would culminate in his revelation. The nature of this restraining or withholding influence will afterwards be considered; whatever it was, the Thessalonians were formerly explicitly informed.

Ver. 7.—*For the mystery.* “Mystery” here denotes something which was unknown or secret before it was revealed (comp. Eph. iii. 3—5). So also one of the names of Babylon, the seat of the antichristian power, is Mystery (Rev. xvii. 3). *Of iniquity;* rather, *of lawlessness;* namely, this apostasy which shall precede the coming of the man of sin. The genitive here is that of apposition—“that mystery which is lawlessness,” whose essence and sphere of operation is lawlessness. *Doth already work; or, is already working.* The mystery of iniquity even now works in secret; but the man of sin himself will not appear until the restraining power be removed. Even at the time the apostle wrote the seeds of apostasy were already sown; the leaven of lawlessness was fermenting inside Christianity; the foundations of a false Chris-

tianity were being laid. Thus the apostle warned the Ephesians that false teachers would arise from among themselves; to Timothy he writes of those perilous times which were then present; and, in his Epistles, mention is made of false practices and doctrines, such as the worship of angels, abstinence from meats, bodily mortifications, and the honour conferred on celibacy. So also John, in his First Epistle, refers to this working of this antichristian power when he says, “Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists. . . . Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world” (1 John ii. 18; iv. 3). “Antichrist does not step on the scene suddenly without any preparations; on the contrary, a stream of antichristian sentiment and conduct pervades the whole history of the world” (Olshausen). *Only he that now letteth; or, restraineth,* the old meaning of the word “let.” *Will let.* These words are not in the original, and ought to be omitted. *Until he be taken out of the way.* The whole clause ought to be rendered, “The mystery of lawlessness is already working, only until he who restraineth is removed;” when that takes place, when the restraining influence is removed, the mystery of lawlessness will no longer work secretly, but will be openly manifested.

Ver. 8.—*And then;* namely, so soon as he that restraineth is taken out of the way. *Shall that Wicked; or, that lawless one,* in whom the mystery of lawlessness is realized; not different from, but the same with, the “man of sin, the son of perdition.” *Be revealed;* appear unveiled in all his naked deformity. No longer working secretly, but openly, and in an undisguised form; no longer the mystery, but the revelation of lawlessness. The apostle now interrupts his description of the man of sin by announcing his doom. *Whom the Lord; or, as the best-attested manuscripts read, whom the Lord Jesus.* Shall consume; or rather, *shall slay* (R.V.). *With the spirit (or, breath) of his mouth.* Various interpretations have been given to this clause. Some refer it to the Word of God, and others to the Holy Spirit, and suppose that the conversion of the world is here predicted; but this is evidently an erroneous interpretation, as the doom of antichrist is here announced. Others refer the term to a cry or word, and think that the sentence of condemnation pronounced by the Lord Jesus on the wicked is intended. But the words are to be taken literally as a description of the power and

irresistible might of Christ at his coming—that the mere breath of his mouth is sufficient to consume the wicked (comp. Isa. xi. 4. “He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked”). And shall destroy (or, *annihilate*) with the brightness (or, *appearance*) of his coming. The two words, *epiphany* and *parousia*, which are elsewhere used separately to denote the coming of Christ, are here employed. There is no ground for the assertion that the first is the subjective and the second the objective aspect of Christ’s coming (Olshausen). The brightness of Christ’s coming is not here expressed; but the meaning is that the mere appearance of Christ’s presence will annihilate the wicked.

Ver. 9.—The apostle resumes his description of the man of sin. *Even him*; not in the original, but necessary for the sense. **Whose coming.** The use of the same term, *parousia*, employed to denote the coming of Christ exhibits the counterpart of the man of sin. **Is after the working**—according to the energy—of Satan. Satan is the agent who works in the man of sin; he being the organ or instrument of Satan. **With all power and signs and lying wonders.** The adjective “lying” ought to be rendered as a substantive, and applied to all three: “With all powers and signs and wonders of falsehood;” whose origin, nature, and purpose is falsehood. Here, also, the counterpart to Christ is manifest; for the same terms—“powers,” “signs,” and “wonders,” are employed to denote his miracles (Acts ii. 22; Heb. ii. 4). The miracles of Christ were miracles of truth; the miracles of the man of sin would be miracles of falsehood. There does not seem to be any essential difference between powers, signs, and wonders; but the words are employed as a mere rhetorical enumeration. It is not to be supposed that the man of sin will be enabled to perform real miracles; they are the wonders of falsehood; but still by them his followers will be deceived (comp. Matt. xxiv. 24).

Ver. 10.—And with all **deceivableness of unrighteousness**; or rather, *with all deceit of unrighteousness* (R.V.); either with all deceit leading to unrighteousness or with all deceit which is unrighteousness. The man of sin works by deceit and falsehood; and by means of imposture and wonders and high pretensions he will succeed in imposing on the world. The energetic power of the man of sin is, however, by no means irresistible; only they who perish will succumb to it. **In them.** In the best manuscripts the preposition “in” is wanting; therefore the words are to be translated *for them or to them*. That perish (comp. 2 Cor. ii. 15); because they received not the love of the

truth. Not only did they not receive the truth when it was offered them, but, what was worse, they were destitute even of a love of the truth. By the truth here is meant, not Christ himself, as some expositors think, but primarily the Christian truth, and secondarily the truth generally. There was in them a want of susceptibility for the truth, and thus not only were they prevented embracing the gospel, but they were led astray by numerous errors and delusions. That they might be saved. The result which naturally would arise from the reception of the truth.

Ver. 11.—For this cause; on account of their being destitute of a love of the truth. God shall send them; or rather, *God sends them*; the present being chosen because the apostasy had already commenced, the mystery of lawlessness was already working. **Strong delusion**; or, *a working of error* (R.V.). These words are not to be weakened, as if they meant merely that in righteous judgment God permitted strong delusion to be sent them; the words are not a mere assertion of judicial permission, but of actual retribution. It is the ordinance of God that the wicked by their wicked actions fall into greater wickedness, and that thus sin is punished by sin; and what is an ordinance of God is appointed by God himself. That they should believe a lie; or rather, *the lie*, namely the falsehood which the man of sin disseminates by his deceit of unrighteousness. Being destitute of the love of the truth, they are necessarily led to believe a lie—their minds are open to all manner of falsehood and delusion.

Ver. 12.—That; *in order that*. The statement of purpose depending, not upon “that they should believe a lie,” but upon “God sends them a strong delusion”—denoting a still more remote purpose of God. God, as the moral Ruler of the universe, will pronounce sentence of condemnation against them, this sentence being the necessary result of their receiving not the love of the truth. Its reception would have been the cause of their salvation; its rejection results in their condemnation. They all might be damned; or rather, *judged* (R.V.). The verb employed does not here, or elsewhere, express the idea of condemnation, though this is implied by the context. Who believed not the truth; namely, the Christian truth; their unbelief of it was the consequence of their want of love of the truth, and was the cause of their being judged. But had pleasure in unrighteousness. Their delight in unrighteousness was wholly incompatible with their belief in the truth, their want of faith arose, not from any defect in their understanding, but from the perversion of their moral nature.

Here the description of the man of sin concludes, and hence the second division of the Epistle closes. The succeeding verses should have been attached to a new paragraph, being the commencement of the third or hortatory portion of the Epistle.

Ver. 13.—But; this may be considered as a simple particle of transition, or as containing a contrast to those alluded to in the previous verses. I thank God that you are not exposed to the delusions of the man of sin and to the destruction of his followers. **We.** By some restricted to Paul, and by others as including Silas and Timothy (ch. i. 1). **Are bound to give thanks alway to God.** Notwithstanding the disorders which had arisen in the Church of Thessalonica, Paul had abundant reason to thank God for his great grace vouchsafed to the Thessalonians, in retaining them in the gospel, and in enabling them to abound in faith and love. **For you, brethren beloved of the Lord; that is, of Christ.** In the former Epistle he calls them "beloved of God" (1 Thess. i. 4), here "of Christ;" one of the numerous indirect proofs in these Epistles of the Divinity of Christ. **Because God hath from the beginning.** Some valuable manuscripts read, "because God hath chosen you as first-fruits," and this rendering has been adopted by several eminent expositors (Jowett, Hofmann, Riegenbach); but the preponderance of authorities is in favour of the reading in our A.V. The phrase, "from the beginning," does not denote "from the beginning of the gospel," but "from eternity." The apostle refers the salvation of the Thessalonians to the eternal election of God. Chosen you to salvation—the final purpose of God's election. **Through; or rather, in,** denoting the elements in which the salvation consisted, or, which is the same thing, the state into which they were chosen. **Sanctification of the Spirit—the Divine side—and belief of the truth—the human side of the element in which the salvation was realized.**

Ver. 14.—Whereunto; to which. The

reference being to the whole clause, being "chosen to salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." He called you. Whom God elects from eternity, he calls in time. **By our gospel; the gospel preached by us.** To the obtaining (or, acquisition) of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Different meanings have been attached to these words; some render them "for the purpose of an acquisition of glory to Jesus Christ;" others, "for a glorious possession of Jesus Christ;" and others, "to be possessors or sharers in the glory of Jesus Christ." The last meaning is the correct one. Believers are constituted "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ."

Ver. 15.—Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions. Traditions generally denote statements orally delivered and reported; here the word denotes the apostle's instructions in Christianity, whether these are given by word of mouth or by letter. **Which ye have been taught, whether by word;** referring to the apostle's preaching when in Thessalonica. **Or our Epistle;** referring to the First Epistle to the Thessalonians.

Ver. 16.—Now our Lord Jesus Christ, and God, even our Father, who hath loved us. These last words, "who hath loved us," are to be restricted to God our Father, whose love was manifested in sending his Son to rescue sinners from destruction. **And hath given us everlasting consolation; or, comfort;** everlasting as contrasted with the temporary and deceitful comfort which the world gives. **And good hope through grace; or, in grace.** "In grace" belongs to the verb "hath given," and denotes the mode of the gift—of his own free grace, in contrast to personal merit.

Ver. 17.—Comfort your hearts, and stablish you; or, according to the best manuscripts, *stablish them*, namely, your hearts. These verbs are in the singular, but their nominative is our Lord Jesus Christ and God our Father, thus implying the unity between these Divine Persons. **In every good word and work.**

HOMILETICS.

Vers. 1, 2.—*The second advent.* 1. *The time of the advent.* The erroneous notions of the Thessalonians concerning the advent. Our Lord's references and the references in the Epistles to the advent. There is no reason for the assertion that the apostles believed in or taught the immediate coming of Christ. They announced the certainty of the advent, but the precise time was not within the sphere of their inspiration. 2. *The practical influence which the doctrine of the second advent should have upon us.* Negatively, it should not deprive us of our sober reason or fill us with alarm. Positively, its certainty should inspire us with hope and fill us with joy; its uncertainty should stir us up to watchfulness and preserve us in patience. We must not measure by our impatience the purposes of him with whom "one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

Ver. 3.—Importance of religious knowledge. We are surrounded by many influences tending either to lead us into error and delusion, or into scepticism and infidelity. We must add to our faith knowledge, and seek to be rooted and grounded in the faith. The truth ought to be the great subject of inquiry. Let us cultivate the love of the truth; let us pursue the truth wherever it leads, lest we should render ourselves liable to the condemnation of those who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness; and lest we should be led from error to error, and be lost in a perfect maze of falsehood.

Vers. 3—9.—The doctrine of antichrist. Antichrist is the caricature or counterpart of Christ. 1. He is the man of sin, the personification of iniquity; whereas Christ is the righteous One, the personification of righteousness. 2. He is the mystery of iniquity; whereas Christ is the mystery of godliness. 3. His advent is announced by the same word as the advent of Christ. 4. His coming occurred in its proper season; so also Christ came in the fulness of time. 5. His coming is after the working of Satan; whereas Christ's coming is in the power of the Holy Ghost. 6. He performs miracles of falsehood, a counterpart of the real miracles which Christ performed. 7. He sitteth in the temple of God, thus occupying the proper seat of Christ. 8. He shows or exhibits himself as God, whereas Christ is the true manifestation of the Godhead. In short, the kingdom of light which Christ has established has its counterpart in the kingdom of darkness.

Ver. 13.—Sanctification. 1. *Its nature.* It denotes separation and consecration. It consists in the mortification of sin and the production of holiness. 2. *Its properties.* Universal, adapted to our peculiar characters, discernible, progressive, in this life always imperfect, constant, and eternal. 3. *Its Author.* The Holy Spirit the immediate Author; it is his peculiar office to produce holiness in the soul. He not only purifies our affections, but takes up his abode in our hearts. 4. *Its instrument.* The belief of the truth. The instrument with which the Spirit works is the Word of God. We must not disjoin these two; the agency of the Spirit and the instrumentality of the Word are both equally essential and equally important.

Ver. 15.—Retention of Scripture. Whilst we reject the false and wrong, we must hold fast to the true and right. This is an age of testing. 1. We must examine the evidences of the Word of God. 2. We must endeavour to find out its meaning by careful study, and by prayer for the guidance and teaching of God's Spirit. 3. We must bring all doctrines and opinions to the test of Scripture, and draw our belief from the Word of God, and not from the opinions and traditions of men. 4. We must ever walk up to the light which we have. The Spirit is promised to guide us into all truth, and if we depend upon him and follow his guidance, we shall not be suffered to go astray.

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Vers. 1, 2.—A misapprehension respecting the time of the second advent. The apostle's main design in this Epistle is to correct a most disquieting error that had arisen upon this point.

I. THE PANIC IN THE THESSALONIAN CHURCH. 1. *It was concerning the date of the second coming of Christ.* "Touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together unto him." The facts of this august event had been prophetically described in the First Epistle. (1) It was the personal coming of Christ in "the day of the Lord" to judge the quick and the dead. (2) It was an event involving their "gathering together unto him" to meet the Lord in the air: a happy meeting, a marvellously glorious sight. 2. *The misapprehension caused a sort of panic.* "That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled"—like a ship tossed upon a stormy sea. It was this deep agitation of mind, this consternation and surprise, which led to the unsettled spirit that manifested itself in the Thessalonian Church. Errors in the region of dispensational truth often have this tendency. 3. *The panic was due to one or other of three sources.* "Neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us."

(1) It may have had its origin in some pretended revelation or spiritual utterance in the Thessalonian Church. Our Lord had predicted false alarms of this sort. "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe him not" (Matt. xxiv. 23). (2) Or it may have come "through word," that is, word of mouth, supposed to be spoken by the apostle during his visit to Thessalonica. (3) Or "through letter as from us," apparently forged letters such as had already become rife in the early Church.

II. THE GROUND OF THE PANIC. "As that the day of the Lord is now present." This is the correct translation; not "it is at hand." 1. *It could inspire no terror for the Thessalonians to know that the day was at hand*, for this had always been the apostle's teaching, as well as that of all Scripture (Matt. xxiv.; Rom. xiii. 12; Phil. iv. 5; Heb. x. 25, 37; Jas. v. 8; 1 Pet. iv. 7). They had been already familiar with the doctrine, which ought rather to have filled their hearts with transcendent gladness. 2. *Their disquietude and distress arose from the belief that the Lord had already come without their sharing in the glory of his kingdom.* Their relatives were still lying in their graves without any sign of resurrection, and they themselves saw no sign of that transformation of body in themselves that was to be the prelude to their meeting the Lord in the air. The apostle tells them distinctly that the day has not come, and that the signs of its approach had not yet been exhibited.—T. C.

Vers. 3—8.—*The rise of the apostasy and the revelation of the man of sin must precede the second advent.* This fact would assure them that a period of time of at least indefinite extent would intervene before the day of the Lord. "Let no man deceive you by any means."

I. THE COMING OF THE APOSTASY. "Because the day will not set in unless there come the apostasy first." 1. *The apostasy is so described because it was already familiar to their minds through his oral teaching.* "Remember ye not, that, when I was with you, I was telling you of these things?" 2. *It points to a signal defection from the Christian faith.* We imagine that the primitive Churches were signally free from error or fault of any sort. The apostle himself notes the signs of beginning apostasy even in his own day. (1) "The mystery of lawlessness doth already work." (2) There were for himself "perils from false brethren." (3) There were in the Church itself "enemies of the cross of Christ." (4) Later still "many deceivers had entered into the world." (5) The apostle foresaw that the evil "would increase unto more ungodliness." (6) This apostasy was to precede the revelation of the man of sin, not to be regarded as identical with it. Yet the two movements were not to be regarded as independent of each other, except in the order or time of their development. (7) The signs of the apostasy in Christendom are to be seen principally in the Papacy, but likewise in the kindred errors and corruptions of the Greek Church as well as in the delusions of Mohammedanism. The elements of the apostasy were, however, to be gathered up and concentrated at last in a single person as their final embodiment.

II. THE REVELATION OF THE MAN OF SIN. "And that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above every one called God, or an object of worship." His characteristics are here distinctly described. 1. *He does not represent a system of error, like Romanism, or the papal hierarchy, or a succession of popes, but a single person.* The man of sin has not yet appeared. Yet Romanism, or the papacy, comprehends much that is involved in the idea of this terrible person, who, however, goes beyond it in the appalling extent of his wickedness. The passage is not symbolic, but literal. It is a literal person who is described. 2. *He is "the son of perdition."* (1) Not because he brings ruin to others, but (2) because he is himself doomed to ruin—going literally to "his own place," like Judas, who may be regarded as a type of him. 3. *His boundless and blasphemous assumptions.* (1) His opposition to every God, true and false. (2) His self-elevation above every God, true and false. His action recalls the prophecy of Daniel: "The king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods" (Dan. xi. 36). This prophecy refers to a polytheistic king. The apostle refers to the man of sin as repudiating all worship, as if he represented a higher divinity than anything worshipped on earth. (a) The

description does not apply to the pope or the papacy: (α) Because the pope, though the head of a system of idolatry, does not oppose God or exalt himself above him, but rather owns himself "a servant of servants of the most high God," and blesses the people, not in his own name, but in the Name of the Triune God. (β) Because, instead of exalting himself above God or objects of worship, he multiplies the objects of worship by the canonization of new saints, and submits, like the humblest of his followers, to the worship of the very saints he has made. (γ) Because the pope, though guilty of arrogating almost Divine powers to himself, does not supersede God so as to make himself God. The man of sin "sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." Though votaries of the papacy have often given Divine titles to the popes, the Popes have never assumed to be God, but only vicars of Jesus Christ on earth. They have claimed to be viceroys of God. The temple of God cannot be the Vatican; nor the Christian Church, which is an ideal building; nor can Rome be regarded as the centre of the Christian Church. (δ) Because this prophetic sketch contains no allusion to strictly papal peculiarities, such as idolatry, either as to the Virgin Mary, saints, angels, or relics, the invention of purgatory, priestly absolution, bloody fanaticism, debased casuistry, lordship over the world of spirits. (b) The description applies to the man of sin—the lawless one—for whom the Papacy prepares the way by a long course of apostasy from the truth. (α) This terrible person is to oppose God and all worship of every sort, and may therefore be regarded as an impersonation of infidel wickedness. (β) He is to sit down in the vacated "temple of God" and claim all the attributes of divinity. He sits down in God's place—for the temple is God's dwelling—in some actual temple, and appropriates it to his own use. Wherever the scene of this marvellous usurpation may be, it signifies the obliteration of all Christian interests and the triumph of atheistic malignity. When the Lord comes, "shall he find faith in the earth?" We see how Positivism in our own day has forsaken the worship of a personal God and betaken itself to the worship of concrete humanity. The man of sin will use the papacy as Auguste Comte travestied it in constructing forms of Positivist devotion, by turning it into some darker shape and making it the tremendous instrument of the world's final ruin.

III. THE CHECK TO THE FULL DEVELOPMENT OF THE MAN OF SIN. "And now what restraineth ye know, in order that he may be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of iniquity is already working only till he who now restraineth be taken out of the way." These words imply: 1. *That the apostasy was already in being*; for "the mystery of lawlessness is already working." The two, if not identical, are closely connected together. (1) It antagonizes Christ, who is "the mystery of godliness" (1 Tim. iii. 16). The mystery is a process, not a person, yet it works against the person of Christ. (2) Many of the elements of the "apostasy" were in existence in the days of the apostles, at least in the germ-state. The Epistle to the Colossians and the Second Epistle to Timothy point to an early development of Gnostic error which found its place in due time in the papal system (Col. ii.; 2 Tim. iii.). The self-deifying tendency was manifested in the conduct of several of the Cæsars. 2. *The words imply that the working of the apostasy was still undefined and as yet unguessed at.* It was still "a mystery," to be revealed in due time. Nothing is more remarkable than the gradual growth of error in the patristic age. False opinions held by pious Fathers in one age were held by errorists in the next age to the exclusion of the truth. 3. *The words imply that, as the apostasy would last through ages, the check would likewise exercise a continuous effect.* The common opinion is that the Roman empire was the restraining power upon the development of the man of sin. It was certainly such upon the course of the apostasy, which was to prepare the way for the man of sin. It held the Papacy in check till it was itself swept away by barbarian violence. Because it has passed away, it does not follow that the man of sin must have been revealed at once; for other checks have been supplied, and are being still continuously supplied, in the polity of nations and in the face of Divine truth, to restrain the last terrible manifestation of his power.

IV. THE DOOM OF THE MAN OF SIN. "Whom the Lord Jesus shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and shall destroy with the appearance of his coming." 1. *This does not refer to the Word and Spirit of Christ working in the minds of men for the destruction of antichristian error and antitheistic wickedness, but to the actual*

personal advent of Jesus Christ. 2. *The language implies the suddenness and the completeness of the overthrow of the man of sin, who thereby becomes "the son of perdition."* 3. *The picture presented may be identical with the Gog and Magog conspiracy which is to follow the millennium.* (Rev. xx. 7, 8.) The Lord puts the question, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith in the earth?" (Luke xviii. 8). Thus the apostle assures the Thessalonians that the day of the Lord cannot have come, because all the events here pictured must happen before that great and terrible day.—T. C.

Vers. 9-12.—*The methods of the man of sin and the retribution that overtakes his victims.* The apostle, after telling the doom of the man of sin by anticipation, goes back upon his description so as to bring out the contrast between the coming of Christ and the coming of his arch-enemy.

I. THE METHODS OF THE MAN OF SIN. "Whose coming is after the working of Satan in all powers and signs and prodigies of lying." 1. *The source of all this wonder-working activity—Satan.* There is more than human depravity at work in this tremendous revelation of evil power. As Satan is a liar and the father of lies, he will stamp falsehood upon the whole system, which he will elaborate with superhuman craft for the misguidance of men. 2. *The character of this activity.* It is external and internal. (1) It is external—"in powers and signs and prodigies of lying." (a) These are to be a mimicry of Christ's miracles, for the three words here used are twice applied to our Lord's miracles (Heb. ii. 4; Acts ii. 22). (b) They were not real miracles, as if they had been done by Divine power, but jugglers' tricks or such-like startling wonders as might delude "the perishing" into the belief that they were done by Divine power. The signs were to be as false as their author. (c) Their design was to attest the truth of the doctrine of the man of sin. (2) It is internal—"in all deceit of unrighteousness"—so as to pass sooner for truth. Guile marks his whole career, and unrighteousness is the aim and result. He "speaks lies in hypocrisy;" "by good words and fair speeches he deceives the hearts of the simple" (1 Tim. iv. 2; Rom. xvi. 18). The ministers of Satan can as easily transform themselves into ministers of righteousness as Satan himself become an "angel of light" (2 Cor. xi. 14, 15). 3. *The effects of this wonder-working activity.* They are confined "to those that are perishing." It is not possible "to deceive the elect" (Mark xiii. 22). Those who are blinded to the glory of the gospel are in the way of easy deception (2 Cor. iv. 3). It is those on the way to perdition who are so easily deceived.

II. THE RETRIBUTION THAT OVERTAKES THE VICTIMS OF THE MAN OF SIN. "Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." The causes of the success of the man of sin are first described on the side of man and then on the side of God. The whole case is one of just retribution. 1. *The sin of the perishing.* (1) The truth was that which brought salvation near, disclosing at once their need of a Saviour and the readiness of Christ to save them. (2) They did not receive it, though it was offered them, but rejected and despised it. (3) They rejected it because they had "not the love of the truth." Without this love, the truth will do us no good; it must be received into the heart as well as the head. Augustine prayed, "Lord, make me taste that by love which I taste by knowledge." 2. *The Divine retribution for the sin of the perishing.* "And for this cause God is sending them an inworking error, that they should believe the lie" of the man of sin. They rejected the truth of God; God will, as a judicial, punitive infliction, send them blindness so that the error of the man of sin will be received as truth. "A terrible combination when both God and Satan are agreed to deceive a man!" There is a double punishment here. (1) They will actually believe the lie of the man of sin. Sin often in the moral government of God is punished by deeper sin. Those who care nothing for the truth are easily seduced into the worst errors. Men will at last become so perverse as to call "evil good, and good evil." (2) They will be finally judged for the pleasure they have taken in unrighteousness. "That all may be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." It follows: (a) That error is not an innocent thing. It has practical issues of the most momentous character. (b) That it is a fearful perversion of the human soul to take pleasure in what God hates. (c) That God allows the sin and madness of men to develop themselves to their fullest extent. (d) That God in this

way will be finally justified in their judgment; he "will be justified in his speaking, and shall be clear in his judging" (Ps. li. 4).—T. C.

Vers. 13, 14.—Apostolic thanksgiving for the election and the calling of the Thessalonians. I. THE DIVINE ELECTION. "God hath from the beginning chosen you."

1. *There is an "election according to grace"* (Rom. xi. 5). It is not to be confounded with the calling, which is an effect of it. "Whom he predestinated, them he also called" (Rom. viii. 30). Our salvation is always traced to "his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." 2. *The date of the election.* "From the beginning." It is "from the foundation of the world" (Eph. i. 4), and therefore does not rest upon the personal claims of individuals. 3. *The means of the election.* "In sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." The election is to the means as well as the end; it cannot take effect without the means. There is an objective as well as a subjective side in the sphere of the election. (1) The sanctification of the Spirit. This is the objective side. (a) It implies a spiritual change of nature. The Spirit applies the salvation, and regeneration is his first work. (b) Sanctification is the evidence as well as the fruit of election. (2) "The belief of the truth." This is the subjective side. Man is not passive in his salvation. (a) As the Spirit is the agent, the truth is the instrument of salvation. (b) The truth must be believed in order to salvation. As men are chosen to be saints, they are chosen also to be believers. (3) The necessary connection between the sanctification and the belief. It might appear as if the belief of the truth ought to precede the sanctification of the Spirit. But there cannot be faith without the operation of the Spirit, while, on the other hand, the sanctification is "through the truth." The two are inseparably joined together. 4. *The end of the election.* "God hath chosen you to salvation." (1) It is not an election to Church privileges. (2) Nor to national privileges. (3) But to salvation itself. (a) This is salvation from sin and sorrow, death and hell. (b) It is "the end of our faith" (1 Pet. i. 9).

II. THE DIVINE CALLING. "Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." The election issues in the call. 1. *The Author of the call.* God. "There is one Lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy." He has the right to call and the power to call. Nothing but Divine power can save the soul. 2. *The means of the call.* "Our gospel." The ministry of the Word was the great instrument in the Spirit's hand of their conversion. 3. *The end of the call.* (1) It was to obtain the glory of Christ. It was to be obtained, not purchased or wrought out by their personal righteousness. (2) Believers are to share in the very glory of their Redeemer.—T. C.

Ver. 15.—Exhortation to a steadfast maintenance of apostolic traditions. "Therefore stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our Epistle."

I. THE GROUND OF THIS EXHORTATION. It was their election and calling. There is a perfect consistency between the Divine election and the obligations of Christian duty.

II. THE NECESSITY OF CHRISTIAN STABILITY. It was specially needful at Thessalonica, in the midst of the agitations and shakings and restlessness that prevailed on the subject of the second advent. Believers were not "to be carried about by every wind of doctrine," lest "being led away with the error of the wicked, they should fall from their own steadfastness." They were to "hold fast the beginning of their confidence," and not "be moved away from the hope of the gospel." 1. *There is safety in stability.* 2. *There is comfort in it.* 3. *It gives glory to God.* 4. *It gives strength and encouragement to the weak and vacillating.*

III. THE MANIFESTATION OF THIS STABILITY. "Hold fast the traditions." 1. *They were of two kinds, oral and written.* "Whether by word, or our Epistle." (1) They included apostolic doctrines—"the form of doctrine delivered to them." (2) Apostolic ordinances, such as baptism and the Lord's Supper, which they had received from the apostles, as the apostles from the Lord. (3) Apostolic rules and usages for the government of the Church. 2. *The traditions in question afford no warrant for the Roman Catholic doctrine of traditions handed down through ages.* Because: (1) The word is here applied to both oral and written teaching. (2) The traditions were not handed

down from some one anterior to the apostle, and from the apostle handed down to the Thessalonians; nor were they committed to the Thessalonians to be handed down to future ages. They were handed over directly by the apostle to the Thessalonians. (3) The doctrine of tradition dishonours the Scriptures, because the traditions are said to be necessitated by the defectiveness and obscurity of Scripture.—T. C.

Vers. 16, 17.—*Prayer after exhortation.* The comprehensive prayer for blessing with which he concludes is strictly after the apostle's manner.

I. THE AUTHORS OF THE BLESSINGS PRAYED FOR. "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father." The order of mention is unusual, though the name of Jesus occurs first in the apostolic benediction (2 Cor. xiii. 14). 1. *God the Father is the ultimate Source of blessing*, as it is through Jesus Christ the blessing comes to us. 2. *There is an entire equality between them*, seeing the blessing is attributed to both. 3. *There is oneness of essence*, as is indicated by the singular verb used in the passage.

II. THE GROUND OF EXPECTATION THAT THE BLESSINGS ASKED WILL BE GIVEN. "Who loved us, and gave us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace."

1. *The Divine love is the true ground of all our hopes of blessing*, for it is everlasting, unchangeable, practical in its ends. 2. *The two elements in the Divine gift.* (1) "Everlasting consolation." (a) A source of unfailing comfort in the midst of the trials of life, springing out of everlasting sources and sufficing to all eternity; for God is a "God of all comfort," and "if there be any consolation," it is in Christ. (b) This comfort is a gift—a mark of Divine favour, not of human merit. (2) "A good hope through grace." (a) This is "the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Titus i. 2). (b) It is a good hope (a) because of its Author; (β) because of its foundation, "through grace;" (γ) because of its purifying effects (1 John iii. 4).

III. THE BLESSINGS PRAYED FOR. 1. *Heart-comfort.* "Comfort your hearts." They needed to be comforted on account of their troubles respecting the second advent. None but God can give true and lasting comfort. "Thou hast put gladness into my heart." 2. *Establishment and perseverance.* "And stablish you in every good word and work." (1) This blessing is to be sought especially in restless and unsettled times. (2) Stability is to be sought in "every good word," so that believers may not be carried away by "winds of doctrine;" and in "every good work," so that they may not be shaken by doubt and thus become restless and disorderly in conduct. Instability is weakness, as stability is strength.—T. C.

Vers. 1, 2.—*The day of Christ not immediate.* I. THE MISTAKE OF THE THESSALONIANS. 1. *In itself.* The day of the Lord is present; it is already dawning; it is close upon us. This thought had taken possession of their souls; it filled their hearts; it left no room for ordinary commonplace duties. They were neglecting these in their strong excitement, in their eager anticipation of the approach of the great day. What was the use of attention to business, of daily labour, of the quiet performance of their accustomed tasks, when the Lord was to be expected at once, when they were to be caught up, away from earth and its employments, to meet the Lord in the air. "We which are alive and remain shall be caught up," St. Paul had said in his First Epistle. They misunderstood his words; they supposed that it must be during their own lifetime; that it might be, that it would be, immediate. 2. *Its origin.* Spirit, word, or letter. "Believe not every spirit" (St. John said); "try the spirits whether they are of God." There were utterances which claimed to be inspired and were not so. The discerning of spirits was one of the manifold gifts of the Holy Ghost. It was their duty not to despise prophesying, but yet to prove all things. There were also words quoted as if spoken by St. Paul; letters, too, purporting to come from him. Men misrepresented him; they attributed the sayings of others, their own, perhaps, to the holy apostle; even letters, it seems, were current, said to be the apostle's, but not really his. People are perplexed often nowadays by the many differences of opinion which exist among Christians. The fact of this diversity is to some an excuse for unbelief or for sloth in spiritual things; to others, a real temptation, a great trial of faith. But we see it has been so from the beginning. There were errors of belief in this infant Church of Thessalonica while the apostle, who had founded it, was still

near at hand—at Corinth. Even in these early days things which he had said were misunderstood; his authority was claimed for words which he had never spoken; and, strangest of all, there were written letters bearing his name which were falsely ascribed to him. We have our trials now. We are troubled, some of us, by the difficulties which arise from various readings or interpretations, by the doubts thrown by modern writers on this or that book of Holy Scripture, by the conflict of opinions in the Church. It is some comfort to think that we of this age are not alone in our temptations; our position is not one of such singular perplexity as some of us are apt to think. If we persevere in prayer, if we try to live by faith looking to the Lord Jesus Christ, the doubts which vex us will soon be cleared away.

II. ST. PAUL'S WAY OF DEALING WITH THAT MISTAKE. 1. *He beseeches them.* He is very gentle with his converts, very earnest too, and affectionate; full of deep anxiety for their spiritual welfare. And it was a matter of great importance. St. Paul had dwelt much upon the coming of the Lord. The Parousia was a subject of much excited talk, much stirring of heart among the Thessalonians. St. Paul had spoken in his First Epistle of "our gathering together unto him;" how "we that are alive and remain shall be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." It was a prospect very blessed, very awful too; it had been opened out in strong, startling words. They inferred from his way of expressing himself that it was very close at hand, to be looked for immediately; their excitement was intense. He beseeches them to listen. 2. *They must be calm.* Religion lies in a calm, quiet walk with God. It has its emotions, they are at times deep and strong; it has its enthusiasm, but it is ordered and grave. They must not allow themselves to be shaken from their settled judgment; they must not give way to this trembling, uneasy excitement. They must return to the quiet, steady discharge of the common duties of life; their best strength was in quietness and confidence. This was the best preparation for the coming of Christ. That coming was not immediate; much was to happen first.

LESSONS. 1. Learn to be sober, thoughtful, to distrust excitement, to live in patient continuance of well-doing. 2. There will be difficulties, perplexities; they are trials of faith; they must be endured in patience and overcome by faith. 3. Prepare for the coming of Christ. The best preparation is to perform each duty as it comes in faith and prayer as unto the Lord.—B. C. C.

Vers. 3—12.—*The man of sin.* I. HE MUST COME BEFORE THE DAY OF THE LORD. 1. *His revelation.* He is antichrist—the evil counterpart of the most holy Saviour; he has his revelation, his apocalypse. There must be an apostasy before the coming of the Lord—a great, notable apostasy. The apostle had warned the Thessalonians of it; we need these warnings now. We must not be discouraged when we see scepticism, unbelief, rampant around us. These things must be; Holy Scripture has forewarned us. We must be prepared; we must be calm and steadfast, looking for the coming of the Lord. Such apostasies there have been; there have been precursors of the man of sin, such as Caligula shortly before the date of this Epistle, or Nero shortly after. There have been evil men among the popes of Rome who have exhibited in their lives some of the characteristic features of the antichrist. But the apostasy is yet to come; the man of sin is yet in the future; the mystery of iniquity is working even now; it is working below the surface, in secret; hereafter, we know not when, it will burst forth into open day in the revelation of the man of sin. We must not look forward to a continual, unopposed progress of the gospel; we must not expect that religion will go on in ever-extended triumphs, with no checks, no defeats, overspreading the earth more and more with its blessed influences. Such an expectation is not warranted either by Scripture or by the signs of the times. Scripture tells us of the coming apostasy, of the revelation of the man of sin. And in the world the forces of unbelief and evil are evidently gathering themselves for a mighty conflict. In our own country, it is true, there has been a great revival of religious zeal, great love for Christ, much earnest, self-denying work for his sake. But alongside of this there has been a great outburst of infidelity, a widespread scepticism, a hatred of revelation, manifesting itself in the life and works of men of learning and culture; while elsewhere the revolt against all forms of authority, Divine and human, has been more outspoken and far more widely spread. The armies of God and Satan, the powers of good and evil, light and darkness, faith and unbelief,

seem to be already marshalled in preparation for an awful struggle. It must come, Holy Scripture warns us; it will culminate in the revelation of the man of sin. He will be revealed—out of previous obscurity; the apparition will be unveiled out of darkness. 2. *His character.* He is a person, a man of mighty intellect and giant strength of will, who will take advantage of a general development of unbelief and lawlessness, and gain for a time a widespread sovereignty. Sin fills his being; it becomes, as it were, incarnate in him; it dominates his entire personality. He is “a son of perdition” like Judas (compare the common Hebraism, “a son of death”), destined himself to eternal death, involving in utter death all who follow him. He is an adversary, a human Satan, filled with all the awful energy, the concentrated malice of the evil one. He is the antichrist, the avowed and bitter enemy of the holy Saviour, bringing with his intense wickedness the horrible cry of “Écrasez l’infame!” into awful prominence. He exalts himself against every one that is called God; he sits in the temple of God, reviving the madness of Antiochus Epiphanes, the impious attempt of Caligula. Such a man the world has not yet seen. There have been many outbursts of wickedness, many evil men in the long course of history have risen to sovereign power; but no one yet has combined in himself all the characteristics ascribed to the man of sin in this Epistle. It is a fearful spectacle which is yet to come. St. Paul warned the Thessalonians that such things there would be, uprisings of malice and persecution, anticipations of the man of sin. He warns the whole Church throughout all time that such things are to be looked for; that sooner or later, before the end cometh, the man of sin himself shall be revealed in all the awful energy of unmingled wickedness, relieved by no one trace of goodness.

II. THE OBSTACLE. 1. *The Thessalonians knew what it was.* St. Paul had told them of this during his short residence in Thessalonica. For some reason he had dwelt much on this awful subject; it must have been necessary for the Thessalonians in their special circumstances, though we know not why. They had knowledge which we have not; they knew precisely what we cannot find out for certain with all our searching. We may be satisfied that this knowledge, then good for them, is not now necessary for us, or it would have been more clearly revealed. “Ye have an unction from the Holy One,” St. John says of believers, “and ye know all things”—all that we need to know for life and godliness. 2. *What was it?* The Roman empire, the power of Roman law, the emperor as embodying that power. This was the answer of most ancient writers; it seems to be the most common answer now. Then the power of Rome checked the outburst of anarchy and lawlessness. It is still the majesty of law, the authority of well-ordered governments, that fulfils the same office. The mystery of lawlessness is working now; it has not reached its height, it has not embodied itself in the fearful personality of the man of sin. But it is working; and it is a mystery, the terrible counterpart of the mystery of godliness. There is a mystery in evil, a strange, fearful mystery, dark secrets not yet revealed; a mystery which suggests awful, heart-rending questionings—questionings which can be quieted only in his presence who giveth rest to the troubled, anxious soul. This mystery of lawlessness was working even then in the world which the God of love created; it is working now; but it is held down by the restraining power; it cannot give birth to the man of sin till his time shall come, the time foreordained in the counsels of God. Then the restraining power will be taken out of the way; lawlessness will prevail, and its creature and embodiment, the lawless one, will come.

III. HIS ACTIVITY. 1. *It is but for a short time.* The Lord Jesus shall destroy him, and that in an instant, when he cometh. He needs only to speak the word of power; the breath of his mouth shall sweep the adversary into that perdition to which he was appointed. The manifestation of his coming, the very sight of the awful Judge, shall slay the wicked one. This must be our consolation when the dark problems of life distress our souls—“the Lord cometh.” Then shall come the assured triumph of righteousness, the crowning victory over all the powers of evil. 2. *But it is tremendous.* As God is revealed in Christ, so is Satan revealed in the man of sin, the antichrist. The “miracles and wonders and signs” (Acts ii. 22) which God did by Christ are parodied by the power and signs and wonders which Satan will work through the agency of the man of sin. As Christ’s coming is with power, with his mighty angels in flaming fire, so is the coming of the lawless one with all power according to the working of

Satan. As God worketh in his saints both to will and to do of his good pleasure, so Satan worketh in this his representative with all the awful energy of diabolical wickedness. The antichrist, says Bengel, stands in the same relation to Satan as Christ to God. The antichrist will work miracles, but they are by the energy of Satan, wonders of falsehood. They are not mere deceptions, they are real miracles; but they are the works of him who is the father of lies; and they are lies, inasmuch as they are intended to mislead men into worshipping him as God who is the personation of Satan, the liar from the beginning. Lies, too, they are, because they are the signs of a power which is only a miserable imposture, which must soon end in death and ruin. Our Lord has warned us (Matt. xxiv. 24) of false Christs and false prophets whose signs and wonders should be so startling as to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. The false prophet, the second beast, of the Revelation doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire to come down from heaven, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he hath power to do. Then there may be, there will be, false miracles, lying wonders. Miracles alone do not always prove the agency of God, but miracles with holiness, works of faith issuing out of a life filled with the presence of God. The blessed life of Jesus Christ our Lord is a mightier miracle than the physical wonders which he wrought. A life of perfect purity and transcendent holiness in the weakness of human flesh, amid all the temptations of this wicked world, is to us a more convincing proof of the Divine mission of Christ than the signs from heaven would have been which the Jews so often asked for. The Church must expect the coming of lying wonders; she must stand unshaken amid all the developments of Satanic energy. The elect will not be deceived, for they will recognize the notes of antichrist, "all the deceivableness of unrighteousness;" they will remember the warnings of Holy Scripture: "Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God," "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning."

IV. ITS RESULT. 1. *He deceiveth them that dwell on the earth*; not the elect—the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God; but those who have not been sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance, the pledge of that seal of the living God which his angel shall one day set upon the foreheads of his chosen. But there are, alas! those that are perishing, who have not passed from death unto life through faith in the Son of God, but still abide in death. Such men the man of sin, the lawless one, deceives and engulfs in his own utter destruction. 2. *Their own wilfulness is the cause of their ruin.* "God is not willing that any should perish." The true light lighteth every man. It came to them, but they received it not. They received not Christ. He is the Truth, and he is Love. He came into the world that the world through him might be saved. But they received not him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. They had no love for the truth, no desire for it. They were quite indifferent to the truth, though their conscience told them that it was the truth; they were worse than indifferent, they rejected it. They might have been saved; the truth would have made them free. They might have been sanctified through the truth; for the truth of God, received into the heart, hath power to cleanse, to purify, to save the soul. But they loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 3. *It ends in judicial blindness.* God's Spirit will not always strive with man. In his awful justice he gives over to a reprobate mind those who persevere in disobedience. He sendeth them a strong delusion, a working of error. As virtue is its own reward, so sin is its own punishment. Eternal sin (see Mark iii. 29 in the best-supported reading) is the fearful end of the obstinate sinner. That hardening of the heart, in which habitual sin must at last result, is ascribed in Holy Scripture sometimes to God, sometimes to the sinner himself, sometimes to the deceitfulness of sin. They are different modes of expressing the same law of God's government. He has so ordered our moral nature, that sin, when it is full grown, bringeth forth death. He lets the rebel have his own will; he leaves him to be "lord of himself, that heritage of woe." The Spirit is withdrawn at last from those who vex, grieve, resist, his gracious influences. But there is something more awful still. Not only did the Spirit of the Lord depart from Saul, but "an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him." God himself sends at the last, in his most awful justice, the strong delusion, the inworking of error. It is the last state, worse than the first; after which comes that dreadful sentence, "It is impossible . . . to renew them again unto repentance." This thought gives a most terrible

significance to every act of wilful, unrepented sin; every such act brings a man nearer (how near he cannot tell) to that most awful state whence there is no repentance. Then comes judicial blindness; the light that was within them becomes darkness. They would not believe the truth of God, now they believe the lie of the man of sin. It is the judgment of God. We see indications of it from time to time in the credulity of unbelief. Men who reject the Bible are sometimes ready to believe anything except the Bible; they will greedily accept any legend, any scientific hypothesis, though evidently not more than a provisional hypothesis, which seems to contradict the Bible; they will deify humanity, they will worship the idol which is the creature of their own thoughts rather than the living God. This unbelief sprang out of sin; they "had pleasure in unrighteousness." There is such a thing as honest doubt; such were the doubts of Asaph, of Thomas. But unbelief in a very large measure comes from moral causes. Sin darkens the heart and the mind; sin always leads to practical, often to intellectual, unbelief. "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light;" he walketh in darkness; he seeth not the coming judgment.

LESSONS. 1. Be prepared for times of darkness—they must come; be strong in faith. 2. If unbelief becomes dominant, still believe; God has forewarned us. 3. Anarchy, confusion, leads to the predominance of sin. "Give peace in our time, O Lord." 4. Even miracles may deceive. Christ remaineth faithful; trust always in him. 5. Hate sin with utter hatred; it ends in hardness of heart.—B. C. C.

Vers. 13—17.—*St. Paul's hopes for the Thessalonians.* I. HE THANKS GOD FOR HIS PAST MERCIES SHOWN TO THEM. 1. *For their election.* He turns from prophecies of coming terrors to thoughts of hope and consolation. He repeats the words of ch. i. 3, "We are bound to give thanks." He felt the greatness of God's mercies to the Thessalonians. Mercies shown to them were shown to him; he so dearly loved them. It was his bounden duty to thank God for them; how much more was it their duty to be thankful for the grace granted to them! God had set his love upon them; God had chosen them from the beginning. This was the source of their blessedness; not any merits, any good deeds, of theirs. All our hopes rest on the electing grace of God. That thought is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons. It was so to the Thessalonian Christians, especially at this time, when awful anticipations of the coming end were casting a dark shadow over them. That election manifests itself in holiness of life. The seal of the Spirit is the earnest, the pledge, of the heavenly inheritance. God's elect must feel within themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh, and their earthly members, and drawing up their minds to high and heavenly things. The sanctification of the Spirit is the sphere in which the life of election moves and energizes. And with the growth of holiness in the heart faith is ever deepened and strengthened. The working of the Spirit greatly confirms the faith of eternal salvation to be enjoyed through Christ; it convinces the Christian soul with a mighty power, with the certainty of intuition, of the reality of the great truths of the gospel, so that the Christian walks in ever-increasing faith, in the power of that victory which overcometh the world. 2. *For the hope of glory.* God had predestinated the Thessalonians to be conformed to the image of his Son; by the preaching of St. Paul he had called them to that state of salvation. They were living in a present salvation; they were looking forwards to a future glory; their high hope was the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. His glory will be the glory of his saints, for he has given it them (John xvii. 22). They are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. All that Christ has is theirs in hope; for Christ himself is theirs, and they are Christ's. The Christian who cherishes this high and blessed hope must live in continual thankfulness.

II. HE URGES THEM TO STEADFASTNESS. 1. *In the life of faith.* Stand fast, he says; fight the good fight of faith. You must do your part. God has chosen you; he has given you his Spirit; he has called you to salvation. Yet you must work out that salvation. We need not perplex ourselves with the deep mysteries which thought cannot fathom; in practice, the duty of perseverance follows from the electing grace of God. He has chosen you; persevere, for he gives you the power; be steadfast, for you owe a great debt of gratitude to him who has so greatly loved you. 2. *In doctrine.* Hold the traditions. St. Paul had taught the Thessalonians by word of mouth. We must remember that in all probability not one of our four Gospels was yet written. The

Thessalonians knew the history of our Lord's life and death, and the doctrines of the Christian faith, only through the oral teaching of St. Paul. The First Epistle was the only part of the New Testament Scriptures known to them; probably the only part as yet in existence. St. Paul had taught orally for several years before he began to write. Oral teaching was often misunderstood, often forgotten, as this Epistle shows. But the teaching of an apostle, whether by word or by writing, was a precious deposit, for that which he delivered to his converts he had himself received of the Lord. Be it ours to continue steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship.

III. HE SUMS UP HIS HOPES IN A BENEDICTION. 1. *He points them to God.* The clause begins in the Greek with the emphatic *αὐτός*, himself. We must stand fast, we must persevere; but it is he who establishes the hearts of his chosen; he only is our everlasting Strength, the Rock of ages. The apostle in this place, as in 2 Cor. xiii. 14, puts the Saviour's name first, because it is by Christ that we have access to the Father. We feel that this order would have been incongruous, impossible, unless Christ were indeed God; we feel that the singular verb could not be used, as it is twice, in ver. 17, unless he and the Father were one (comp. 1 Thess. iii. 11). God the Father is our Father, St. Paul says emphatically. He loved us; on his fatherly love rests our election, our hope of glory. He has given already to his saints eternal comfort, a comfort independent of the changes and chances of this earthly life—a comfort eternal, for it rests on him who is eternal; and with that comfort which is present, though not temporal, not confined within the limits of time, he has given also a good hope of future glory, the blessed hope of everlasting life with God in heaven. And this he has given in grace, in the encompassing atmosphere of his favour, without merit or works of ours. 2. *He prays that God's blessing may still rest upon them.* He who loved them, and gave them eternal comfort and good hope, will surely comfort and establish them. His first gifts are a pledge of their continuance. He will not leave his work unfinished. His love is like himself, eternal. He can shed that blessed comfort into the heart, the inmost seat of joy and sorrow. When there is hidden comfort there, outward troubles may cause sorrow, but cannot take away the fulness of joy. He can establish our heart; he can give us that established heart, fixed, trusting in the Lord (Ps. cxii. 7, 8), which the world, the flesh, the devil, cannot shake. Then we shall speak only words of truth and love, and do only works of righteousness and faith through that inner comfort and strength which comes from God alone.

LESSONS. 1. In the midst of dangers there is comfort for the saints; they are in the hands of God; God hath chosen them. 2. Look for the evidence of God's election in holiness of life; without holiness we cannot see him. 3. Be steadfast; make your calling and election sure; take heed lest ye fall. 4. Only God can give "eternal comfort." Seek that precious gift of him; it is given to those whom he establishes in every good word and work.—B. C. C.

Vers. 1—12.—*Antichrist.* I. ERROR REGARDING THE COMING OF CHRIST. "Now we beseech you, brethren, touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him; to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by Epistle as from us, as that the day of the Lord is now present; let no man beguile you in any wise." The apostle beseeches the Thessalonians as brethren, in the interest of correct views of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is his principal topic in both Epistles. The comforting side of the coming is the gathering together of all believers unto him, never to be followed by a separation, as set forth in 1 Thess. iv. 17, "Then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them" (the dead in Christ who have been raised) "be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." By the way in which he introduces this gathering together, it can be seen that it was very attractive to him. It was that in the coming which he especially wished to be conserved. In the beginning of 1 Thess. v. the apostle had distinctly taught the uncertainty of the time of the coming. But representations had been made to the Thessalonians that the day of the Lord was actually beginning. Three forms which these representations might take, or, more probably, did take, are specified. There were representations founded upon pretended prophecy. There were also representations founded upon an alleged oral communication of the apostle. There were further repre-

sentations founded upon an alleged Epistle of the apostle. The existence and circulation of a fabricated Epistle seem to be hinted at in the words at the close of this Epistle: "The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every Epistle: so I write." If the Thessalonians accepted of these representations, there was danger of their being precipitately shaken from their composure of mind and even thrown into a terrified state, as at sea men are discomposed and even horrified by the bursting of a storm upon them. The apostle, therefore, considered it necessary to write this Epistle, to put them on their guard against their being led away by these representations. Let no man beguile them in these ways, or, making it wider, in any other way.

II. THE ANTICHRISTIAN MANIFESTATION. 1. *The coming of Christ to be preceded by apostasy.* "For it will not be, except the falling away come first." "Apostasy" (after the Greek) is the more technical word—the apostasy of which the Thessalonians had been told. There is, particularly, meant falling away from the faith of Christ. It is a movement begun by those who have been within the Christian circle, and who, after having been advantaged by Christianity in outward enlightenment and quickening, have ungratefully turned away. Or the movement away from Christ may dishonourably be encouraged by those who still remain within the Christian circle, but have lost faith in the distinctive teachings of Christianity. The name of "apostate" has been given to the Emperor Julian for his signal renunciation of Christianity, but it is a name which belongs to every one who in the struggle of life parts with his early Christian convictions, his good traditions. Let us see that we are not, in the smallest degree, contributing to the movement away from Christ. 2. *The revelation of the man of sin.* "And the man of sin be revealed." It is now an exploded idea that the man of sin means popery. The principal interpreters—Olshausen, Ellicott, Alford, Eadie—hold to the idea of the man of sin being a person. He is supposed to be the last and worst product of the apostasy. He is a caricature of Christ, having a mystery, and revelation, and miracles, and claim of divinity, a coming and preparation, even as Christ has. He is as inclusive of all the bad forms of humanity, as Christ is of all its good forms. It cannot be said of this most unlovely conception that it has the similitude of truth. It cannot be dogmatically laid down as a matter of interpretation that the man of sin is a person, any more than the restrainer is a person. The designation "man of sin" points, in the first place, to sin as the essence of the apostasy. The moving away from Christ is an opposing of the Divine authority. The designation "man of sin" points, in the second place, to sin as working under human (not angelic) conditions, and, taken along with apostasy, points especially to the development of sin in human history. The designation "man of sin" points, in the third place, to this historical development, not as actual, but as idealized. As the language, "O man of God," is a call to consider the true ideal of manhood, so the man of sin may be viewed as the ideal of the development of sin among men. In so far as popery is after this ideal may it be said to be the man of sin. In so far as any of us take after the bad ideal of manhood may it be said to us, "O man of sin!" calling us to consider what we are following after. Let us see that we do not in the least merit the designation. By the revelation of the man of sin is to be understood the bringing out of the real nature of sin. It may put on specious forms, but it is essential vileness; it is uglier than the ugliest of creatures, it is more venomous than the serpent, it is more grovelling than the earth-worm, it is blacker than darkness. And in the working of Providence in human history, it is intended that this should be, with accumulating evidence and unmistakably, brought out. And we are here taught that there cannot be the revelation of Christ at his coming until all that is evil in sin has been brought out. 3. *The son of perdition.* "The son of perdition." The common Hebrew form is followed. Sprung from perdition, he has perdition as his destiny. The designation marks the result of the movement away from Christ. Every such movement must prove in the end abortive. How many of those movements that once had vitality in them have already ended in perdition! The designation was given by our Lord to Judas Iscariot: "And none of them is lost, but the son of perdition." And it is certainly not to be wondered at that he whose apostasy was aggravated by the proximity in which he stood to Christ should strikingly be shown in his suicidal end to be the son of perdition. In so far as any of us are moving away from Christ we are placing our pateruity in perdition, and are working out perdition as our destiny. Let us, then, be warned by what will yet be seen to come out of sin. 4. *The opposer of Christ.* "He that

opposeth." It is not said, "He that opposeth Christ," but, from the way in which Christian thought is interwoven with the whole paragraph, we may understand that to be the meaning. We may, therefore, regard the movement as described by the designation "antichrist" with which John supplies us. As it is in its origin a movement away from Christ, so it comes to have the character of being directed against Christ. It is a movement in which advantages gained from Christ are unworthily used against him. As it is the object of God in the Church to put forward Christ for the acceptance of men, so it is the object of antichrist to draw away men from Christ. Popery is antichrist in so far as it does not give Christ and his words and his death their proper place in Christian belief and life. It may be said of us that we are antichrist in so far as we do not yield ourselves up to Christ, and do not to our utmost ability help forward the cause of Christ. "He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." 5. *The deifier of self.* "And exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God." There is strong confirmation here of the doctrine of Müller, that all sin is of the nature of selfishness. Antichrist is selfishness rising to the impious height of self-deification. He raises himself above and against him who is truly called God, without thereby falling into idolatry; for he also raises himself above and against those that have only the *name* of gods, and, it is added (going beyond the actually named), above and against all that *can* be turned into an object of worship. He does not, therefore, shut out the sacred sphere; rather does he fill it with himself. He is the centre of all wisdom, power, and glory for which worship is due. The startling language is that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God. There is supposed to be meant a session in the actual temple in Jerusalem by those who, laying undue stress upon the language here, regard the paragraph as having already received its fulfilment. But there is reference to the actual temple only by way of illustration. As God was represented as sitting between the cherubim, requiring the adoration of all Israelites (as he was the object of adoration to the highest intelligences), so antichrist entertains the thought of divinity and strictly requires adoration. While in Christ's consciousness of divinity there was the element of infinite self-sacrifice, in antichrist's presumptuous thought of divinity there is only the element of utter selfishness. We are not to think here merely of him who sits in the Church and arrogantly wields spiritual power. Rather are we to see the tendency of the whole movement away from Christ. This is how it aims at expressing itself. This is the dreadful interpretation of what it would be at. And it is true of us all, in so far as we are selfish, that we are aiming at making a temple for ourselves in which to sit down and to require adoration. As we in our present state of feeling can only recoil from such self-deification, let us beware of that selfishness which is at the heart of sin. 6. *The Thessalonians reminded of former teachings on the above points.* "Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?" In his teachings on the coming he was not corrected or supplemented by recent revelation. He had occupied the same position from the beginning; such is undoubtedly his own contention, and is against the contention of some who attribute to him that he believed that he would live to see the coming. He reminds the Thessalonians here, not without some measure of blame, that when he was with them (and he singles out himself in making this statement) he told them some things which he was now putting down in his letter.

III. THE RESTRAINING POWER. 1. *What restrains the antichristian manifestation.* "And now ye know that which restraineth, to the end that he may be revealed in his own season." This was another point on which he had given them information. It is left indefinite what the restraining power is. The prevailing opinion, as expressed by Ellicott, is "well-ordered human rule, the principles of legality as opposed to those of lawlessness—of which the Roman empire was the then embodiment and manifestation." It is true that civil rule keeps back many of the manifestations of evil. The civil ruler is a terror to evil-doers. If men were allowed to give vent to their evil passions without dread of punishment, this world would be a pandemonium. But, at the same time, it is true that the worst manifestations of evil, of proud defiance of God, of bitter rancour against Christ (which are chiefly to be thought of in connection with the antichristian movement), are those with which the civil magistrate has little to do. The condition upon which these manifestations depend is rather the increased setting forth

of Christ. There is a manifestation of good going forward, as well as a manifestation of evil. It must yet be shown in human history that there is an essential loveliness belonging to the Christian life. Many Scriptures promise a period of conquest for the Church. When the Church extends its conquests there will be a solidarity of influence on the side of Christ of which no adequate conception can now be formed. The result of that will be, among those who participate in the antichristian movement, deepened hatred against Christ. As when he conquered on the cross there was a calling forth against him of the worst elements especially of superhuman evil, so when he advances to conquest in human history there will be a similar calling forth of the worst elements especially of human evil. The time when evil is thus powerfully to be revealed has been fixed by God. It may be said that the apostle should, according to the interpretation, have regarded the Christian manifestation as coming to a head. But it was open to him to regard it under a special aspect as that which in its yet partial character held back the full manifestation of antichrist. 2. *The present working of the mystery of lawlessness.* "For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work." "Lawlessness," which corresponds to "sin," formerly used, is not to be taken as favouring the view that the restraining power is human rule. It points to the antichristian movement as characterized by a disposition to cast off all authority, especially the highest authority. The stress is to be laid on "mystery." Evil was then working, and in working was revealing itself, but its true nature as opposition to Christ was largely concealed, was only very partially revealed. A lurid light was thrown upon it by the ten great persecutions which, under the Roman emperors, were directed against Christianity. Light is thrown upon it by the attacks which in the present day are made upon Christianity. But it would seem that we have not seen all that is in it of opposition to Christ. The mystery of lawlessness still works. 3. *The removal of the restrainer.* "Only there is one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming." Ellicott regards the use of the masculine gender as a realistic touch, by which what was previously expressed by the more abstract "restraining power" is now represented as concrete and personified. It is strange how this should not be regarded as applying also to the "lawless one" to whom the restrainer is here opposed. If the restrainer is human rule, then his removal must mean the upturning (apparently general) of human rule. And that is what is contemplated by some as the conclusion to human history. But the restrainer being "Christianity not come to the season of its full manifestation," his removal must mean the arrival of that season. When Christianity, working among the multitudes of men, brings its full influence to bear on the antichristian movement, in what it calls forth of opposition, that movement will come to the completeness of its exposure. And antichrist, thus morally defeated, eternally disproved, will have taken away from it its sphere of operation. It will be slain with the breath of Christ's mouth, and brought to nought by the manifestation of his coming.

IV. THE LYING CHARACTER OF THE ANTICHRISTIAN MOVEMENT. 1. *Lies of Satan.* "Even he, whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders." As Satan is a liar and the father of lies, so the antichristian movement which he inspires is characterized by lying. As Christ has power and signs and wonders of truth, so the antichristian movement has power and signs and wonders of lying. It is remarkable that the Church of Rome puts forward a claim of miracle-working, which helps it to preserve its influence over minds, but which it cannot establish. The power and signs and wonders by which men are apt to be deluded now are more of an intellectual nature. It is objected to Christianity that the miracles with which it is bound up are shown by science to be impossible. It is objected that it presents too severe a view of our human condition, in representing us as standing in need of salvation. It is objected that it presents too severe a view of the character of God, in representing him as punishing sin in Christ. It is objected that it presents too severe a view of human duty, in calling upon us to forsake all and follow Christ. When these objections are powerfully presented, and so as to have the appearance of saving the character of God from aspersions, there may be the effect, which false miracles have often had, of men being deluded. 2. *Lies of Satan leading to unrighteousness.* "With all deceit of unrighteousness." When men entertain false views,

especially of the character of God, there is an easy transition to unrighteousness. There are many ways in which they can persuade themselves, that they may exercise liberty in their manner of living. They do not need to pray to God; they do not need to read God's Book; they do not need to keep God's day; they do not need to be strictly honourable in their transactions; they do not need to make sacrifices for others. It is enough that they keep up an appearance of probity and purity, and, it may be, of religion, before men. They can leave all their failings to the general mercy of God.

3. *Unrighteousness leading to destruction.* "For them that are perishing." From unrighteousness there is a necessary, though, it may not be, an immediate, transition to destruction. When men do not observe the rules which are laid down for them by God, they are contending with God, and, contending with God, they cannot in the end succeed; for God is stronger than they. There were those who were perishing in their unrighteousness in Paul's day. And there are still those who seem to be perishing in their unrighteousness.

4. *The just dealing of God.* (1) *What those who are in the antichristian movement reject.* "Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." The apostle holds that it was their own fault if they were perishing. And, in doing so, he brings forward very precious truth. God has in view our salvation. He willeth that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. For this end he makes us the offer, not of the truth, but of the disposition which is necessary for finding it—the love of the truth. Of all dispositions it is that which is most needed to begin with. It is that which is needed against the deceitfulness of the heart. It is that which is needed against the delusive lies of Satan. If we accept of the love of the truth, if we have the disposition to know the truth about ourselves, and to follow the Divine leading—and God promises us this disposition—then we shall certainly be led on to salvation. But if we do not accept of the love of the truth, if we have the disposition to flatter ourselves, and to follow some *ignis futurus* of our own imagination—and that is only too natural to us—we shall as certainly be led on to destruction.

(2) *What they induce.* "And for this cause God sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in righteousness." Receiving not the truth, it was not with them as though the offer had not been made to them. There was induced a state of judicial blindness. As it was induced in connection with the Divine offer which was refused, and in accordance with the Divine laws in their nature, it could be attributed to God. It could be said that God sent them a working of error, that they should believe a lie. Christianity is the most reasonable, most beautiful thing in existence. But when men are in a state of judicial blindness, they do not see its reasonableness and beauty; they believe men who lie about it, and treat it with indifference, or disdain, or hatred. This can only lead on to their being judged and condemned, the ground of their condemnation being their not believing the truth especially about Christ, but taking pleasure in unrighteousness. Let us see, then, that we accept the great offer from God of veracity, of love for the truth. Let us be willing to take a truthful view of things; not taking darkness for light, and evil for good. Let us be willing to follow the Divine leading. Let us especially be open toward Christ—toward the efficacy of his blood, toward the convincing power of his teachings, toward the enjoyment of his fellowship. And, if the antichristian manifestation goes forward around us, let us be all the more decided on the side of Christ.—R. F.

Vers. 13—17.—*Exhortation to steadfastness.* I. How GROUNDED. 1. *The election of the Thessalonians.* "But we are bound to give thanks to God alway for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, for that God chose you from the beginning unto salvation." This is another overflowing of gratitude for the Thessalonians, who are described not, as in 1 Thess. i. 4, as "brethren beloved of God," but as "brethren beloved of the Lord," i.e. sharing with Paul and his colleagues in the special love and care of him who presides over the brotherhood. There is the same inward binding that there was before (ch. i. 3) to give thanks to God, and to give thanks to God alway. What gave perpetual matter of thanksgiving, as in 1 Thess. i. 4, was the election of the Thessalonians. There is not brought in here, as there is there, their being chosen out of a condition of sin, but it is implied in their being chosen unto a condition of salvation. They had been chosen from

the beginning, *i.e.* from eternity. When God contemplated the creation of a race of men, and contemplated at the same time the incursion of evil into human nature and human history, he also contemplated human salvation. It was also within the Divine plan (going out into all particulars) that the Thessalonians among others should be saved. 2. *Means of the realization of their election.* (1) *Inward means.* (a) *From the Spirit.* "In sanctification of the Spirit." Precedence is naturally given to the work of the Spirit. For we must feel that, if God had not approached us first, we never should have approached him. The work of the Spirit, from beginning to end, is a work of sanctification. It is a saving work, inasmuch as it is the reclamation of our nature from unholy uses. On the positive side it is the fitting our nature for Divine uses. As the Spirit is the Agent of our sanctification, his all-sufficient help must be entirely depended upon. (b) *From themselves.* "And belief of the truth." In election we are responsible for our state of mind. The Spirit works on our mind through the truth. We may think of the truth that God has provided salvation for us. We may also think of the truth that God (according to ver. 10) has made us the offer of the love of the truth. We may further think of the Divine ideal to which our life is to be brought up. The Spirit has sovereign power in the presentation of truth to the mind; and what we have to do is to be receptive, to offer no obstacle to his presentation of the truth. And we are sanctified only in so far as we have received the truth into us. (2) *Outward means.* "Whereunto he called you through our gospel." The gospel is especially the offer of salvation on the ground of Christ's death. It was *their* gospel, as that in connection with which they served God. There was Divine sovereignty in the Thessalonians being favoured with the gos. el. It was by circumstances over which they had no control that Paul and Silas and Timothy were sent to Thessalonica. These servants of Christ stood forward and preached the gospel to them, and it was when they received it as a message from God that they were called to salvation. From that point their calling dated. *There is added the outward aspect of the salvation to which they were called.* "To the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." This is characteristic of the Epistle. The glory to which we are called is the glory which is possessed by Christ, and which he, as sovereign Dispenser, is to make our possession. We are to be glorified with nothing less than the glory of Christ. It will be seen that God, in electing, has in contemplation all the means of the election being realized. We may assure ourselves of belonging to the number of the elect, in so far as we have evidence of our election in our sanctification.

II. How *PUT*. "So then, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye were taught, whether by word, or Epistle of ours." Election contemplating the means of its realization in faith, it is not improper to found upon election an exhortation to steadfastness. They had taken up their Christian position. Attempts would be made in the way of persecution to move them away from their position. The ill-grounded expectation of the immediate coming was fraught with perils to them. It was already having a bad effect upon some in making them idle. It would be trying, to think that it was well grounded and not to have it realized. It would even be trying, to know that it was ill grounded and to have to give it up. There would be danger of religious excitement being followed by reaction. Let them beware, then, of apostatizing; let them stand fast. The way in which they were to stand fast was by holding fast the traditions. By the "traditions" we are to understand the truths handed to men. For instance, there was the revelation which was necessary for the stablishing of the Thessalonians, that there was to be an apostasy before the coming of Christ. In the traditions they had been instructed both *orally* and by *writing*. We are limited to the latter mode of instruction. What are known as ecclesiastical traditions have not independent authority, but have to be tested by the written Word. All our oral instruction has to be founded upon the written Word. By being in writing, the truths handed to us are preserved from corruption. We know that we have them in the form in which God wishes us to have them. It is difficult to escape the influence of traditional interpretation. Yet there is always the opportunity of a true interpretation, while we have the text as it was left by inspired men. The written Word is one of the great boons conferred on men. It is a great advantage to a child that he has not everything to learn for himself, but has the benefit of the experience of his parents.

So it is a great advantage to us, that we are not left to our own childish and foolish thoughts, but that we have the written instructions of our heavenly Father. It is by holding to these written instructions, as an unchanging element in the midst of all the tests to which we are subjected, in the midst of all the temptations to which we are exposed, that we shall be enabled valiantly to maintain our Christian position.

III. HOW FOLLOWED UP. *Invocation of the Divine blessing.* 1. *How God is invoked.* (1) *In the Second Person.* "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself." From evangelical activity there is a rise first to the Mediator and lordly Dispenser of blessings in the Church. After the preachers have done their best for the Thessalonians, they have the painful consciousness left that they are impotent in themselves. At Corinth Paul planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So Paul and Silas and Timothy, feeling that they, in speaking and writing to the Thessalonians, were only held by him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, implore his help to make their activity successful. "Our Lord Jesus Christ himself accomplish what we are aiming at for them. Let his almighty efficacy be communicated through our feeble instrumentality." If we would do any good to any in whom we are interested, Christ must do it for us. His high priestly service must be recognized by us. Therefore let us ever rise above our mere wishing and striving for others to him who can make our wishing and striving effectual. (2) *In the First Person.* (a) *His fatherhood.* "And God our Father." From evangelical activity there is a rise, through the Mediator, to him who is the Final Reason and Contriver of redemption. We have some influence with God when we can call him our Father. We naturally expect to have more influence with a friend than with a stranger. We can appeal to him as a friend. We can, if need be, intercede on the score of friendship and long acquaintance. So we can appeal to God as our Father, to bless not only ourselves but others. And, should every other appeal fail, surely this shall not fail. When the cry comes up on behalf of his needy children, "Our Father, wilt thou not bless?" surely he will not turn away his ear. (b) *Wherein it was manifested.* "Which loved us." This is *timed* in the past, and calls up the great act of love—the gift of the Son. Our Father, who gave his Son for us. We can behold in this how God can love. Some would represent it as very unfatherly. But, apart from the Son's unforced consent, there is this consideration, that, where there is true fatherly feeling, it is not more easy to sacrifice a son than to sacrifice one's self. David felt this when he uttered his lamentation over Absalom: "Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" We must hold that, loving the Son infinitely, the Father could as well have sacrificed himself as his Son. The marvel and mystery is, that, loving his Son infinitely, he could be moved to sacrifice him for us his undeserving creatures. But surely by this act of devotion the love of God for us is placed for ever beyond all doubt. In presence of the cross, to doubt, or to act as though we doubted, that God loves us, is doing him the most glaring injustice. (c) *What it obtained for us.* "And gave us eternal comfort." There is no hiding it, that it is comfort that we all need. There is an evil heart, to keep us from being happy. It gives rise to slavish fear of God and forebodings or judgment. There is also an evil world, which alone is sufficient to keep us from being perfectly happy. It is an evil world, where there is exposure to poverty, to sickness, to bereavement, to death. It is an evil world, where, with sensitive spirits, we have to look forth on so much sin and wretchedness. Where, then, is the comfort? There is no real comfort for a guilty conscience in ignorance or distraction. It is unsubstantial comfort, to know that our suffering is common. There is some substantial comfort in the sympathy of our fellow-men, but it is variable. We may not find friends all that we would desire them to be to us. Those by whom we are most comforted may be taken away, and we have to be comforted for their loss. But there is comfort provided by eternal love, and comfort that is eternal in its nature. There is comfort in knowing that our great Substitute has made full satisfaction for our sin. There is comfort in knowing that we are clasped to the heart of the everlasting Father. That is comfort which is neither deceitful nor fleeting. It is sufficient for us amid all the cares of life. It is independent of all contingencies. "And good hope." Comfort refers to time present; hope refers to time future. Beyond all that we have of good and of comfort under evil, there is hope. And what is this hope? It is the hope of our real joys being perfected, of our being delivered from the plague

of an evil heart and the burden of an evil world, of our being placed where there will be no more need of comfort—in the presence of the eternal Love. It is also a good hope, in its being well founded—not founded on our own thoughts, but founded on the character and work and promise of God. It is a hope which is even now good in its cheering influence upon our hearts. (*d*) *Obtained without deserving of ours.* “Through grace.” The comfort is not self-created; we have had nothing to do with the procuring of it. But, seeing it has been graciously provided for us by eternal Love, we have good reason for taking it in the whole benefit into our hearts. The hope is one which we could not have dared to cherish of ourselves. It is far beyond anything that we could have thought of. But we cannot limit the grace of God. If it is his good pleasure to give us this hope, we have good reason for cherishing it. 2. *For what end God is invoked.* (1) *To bless the Thessalonians with comfort.* “Comfort your hearts.” There is another incidental proof here of the Divinity of our Lord in the use of a singular verb, while both our Lord Jesus Christ and God our Father are the subject. The hearts of the Thessalonians were full of hopes and fears in view of the coming which was thought to be imminent; comfort is, therefore, invoked for their hearts. It cannot but be congenial to God to comfort the Church. “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.” Having provided the comfort in Christ, he must best know how, through Christ, to apply it to our need. (2) *To bless them also with stability.* “And stablish them.” Comfort is invoked partly with a view to stability. When we are un comforted we are unstable as water. Our energies are relaxed, and we are unfitted for our work. Sorrow is weakness, but comfort is strength. *Double sphere in which stability is invoked for them.* (*a*) *Work.* “In every good work.” It was not unnecessary that they should be reminded that they were called to work, even to work with their hands. God grant them all the good elements which belong to work. Let the simplest work be done honestly. Let not their works “with self be soiled.” Let them be done unto the glory of God. In these, and in all the elements of good work, let them be confirmed. (*b*) *Word.* “And word.” Good speaking is even more difficult than good acting. “If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man.” God grant them all the good elements which belong to speaking. Let every word be characterized by truthfulness. Let it also have fitness; for “a word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.” Let it also have wholesomeness, and not be like bad fruit. Let it breathe kindness. Let it breathe loyalty to Christ. In these, and in all the elements of good speaking, let them be confirmed.—R. F.

Vers. 1, 2.—*A great delusion.* One object, perhaps the principal object, of this Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, following as it does so closely upon the First Epistle, is to correct a disturbing error that was obtaining some considerable footing among the Macedonian Christians.

I. THE GREAT DELUSION. The First Epistle contains repeated references to an expectation of the second advent of Christ which was evidently very strong in the Thessalonian Church. The wish is father to the thought. From expecting “the day of the Lord” to arrive at any moment, some had been led, on most insufficient evidence, to ask whether it had not already come. The great delusion was that “the day of the Lord is now present.” It is not likely that any supposed Christ to have come, though in an invisible way, and in a different manner from which it was expected, or that they thought he might have come to another place, unseen and unknown to the Churches of northern Greece. What they were inclined to think seems to have been that the new era in which Christ was to appear had already dawned, though he himself had not yet come. Similar is the delusion of any who suppose that the day of grace is over and the time of judgment come, or that of those who think they have got into a new dispensation beyond the dispensation of the New Testament.

II. THE SOURCES OF THE DELUSION. 1. *Latter-day prophecy.* The expression “either by spirit” seems to refer to the supposed inspiration of Christian prophets. St. Paul had previously warned his friends to prove all things, while not quenching the Spirit, by despising prophesyings (1 Thess. v. 19—21). We must beware of self-

deluded fanatics as well as of deliberate deceivers. 2. *False apostolical tradition.* "By word—" probably means by reported word of St. Paul, which word, however, never really came from him. Thus early were false traditions afloat. See the mistaken tradition about St. John (John xxi. 23). If these erroneous traditions were current during the lifetime of the apostles, how can we accept so-called "apostolic tradition" as an authority? 3. *A forged Epistle.* The mistake could scarcely have arisen from our First Epistle to the Thessalonians, since that Epistle referred to the great day as future, while the error made it present. It is important to ascertain the authenticity of the books of Scripture.

III. THE DANGER OF THE DELUSION. St. Paul warns against it as something to be carefully avoided. Many evils attached to it. 1. *Erroneous views.* These are bad in themselves, as true views are desirable on their own account. The soul suffers for want of truth as the body for want of light. 2. *Dishonouring conceptions of the second advent.* If the day were already come, where was the glory, the judgment, the rectification of all things? False doctrines dishonour Christ even when they are meant to glorify him. 3. *Confusion of conduct.* Such a delusion as that which was creeping into the Thessalonian Church would disarrange all practical life. Delusions about the second advent distract attention from sober Christian work.

IV. THE WARNING AGAINST THE DELUSION. 1. *Form no hasty opinion.* "Be not quickly shaken," etc. Specious arguments should be examined at leisure before they are adopted. 2. *Do not permit novel teaching to give distress.* If the heart is well settled in Christian truth, though the mind should be open to receive new light, no distress or disturbance need be felt. 3. *Beware of deception.* "Let no man beguile you." Christians should be watchful and "wise as serpents," each having his own independent convictions.—W. F. A.

Ver. 3.—*The man of sin.* The man of sin and his awful character and career, here described by St. Paul, are subjects of such deep and dreadful mystery, that we may well take warning from the intricate confusion of the interpretations put forth by those people who profess to expound the fulfilment of prophecy, and content ourselves with accepting the prediction as it stands without attempting to identify it with particular historical events. Though some of its terms apply well to certain explanations, and others to different explanations, no explanation has yet been furnished which fairly and without any straining of words covers the whole of them. From Nero to the pope, from the days of the siege of Jerusalem to those of the yet future millennium, certain odious persons and systems have been selected for a realization of the prophecy. Leaving these dubious identifications, let us look at the main outlines of the picture.

I. THERE IS A MAN OF SIN. Whether he lived in the past or has yet to appear, a man to whom this awful name belongs is described in inspired Scripture. The Bible does not ignore the awful depths of human wickedness. It is dreadfully significant that this evil being is a man, not a devil. Humanity, which was created in the image of God and intended to be a temple of God, may be degraded into the image of Satan and become a haunt of iniquity. As good works through human sympathies, so does evil. A bad man is more dangerous than a fallen angel, because he is nearer to his fellow-men.

II. THE MAN OF SIN FOLLOWS AN APOSTASY. 1. *Spiritual apostasy leads a man to moral corruption.* The man who has forsaken Christ is tempted to fall into gross sin. Faith is the great preservative of morals. 2. *Apostasy lays the Church open to attacks from her enemies.* The "man of sin" could not arise before the Church had fallen, nor if he had appeared could he have had any power against a faithful Church.

III. THE MAN OF SIN PRECEDES THE SECOND ADVENT OF CHRIST. It was a mistake on the part of the Thessalonian Church to suppose that "the day of the Lord" had arrived, because the dreadful appearance of the man of sin which was to precede that day had not yet been seen. St. Paul warns us that apostasy and the frightful life of this wicked man—whoever he may be—must come before Christ returns. He does not encourage us to look for a gradual, unbroken progress of Christianity. The growth of the harvest fruit is arrested and delayed by frost and storm. Christ even wondered whether he should find any faith left on the earth at his return (Luke xviii. 8). The glorious consummation of all things to which the Christian looks forward is not to be

expected as the result of quiet improvement without relapse. Between the present and that "great Divine event" dark chasms of iniquity yawn. Every age has thought it could detect signs of this evil in its midst. So the unbelief and corruptions of our own day are taken by some to be "signs." Unhappily the language of the apostle warns us to expect more terribly demonstrative signs than any yet seen.

IV. THE APPEARANCE OF THE MAN OF SIN IS A SIGN OF THE APPROACHING ADVENT OF CHRIST. Here is some encouragement for the Church to endure the trials of the darkest times. These times are to usher in the great and glorious day of the Lord. Evil, when most triumphant, is nearest defeat. Dreadful as may be its transient success, it will soon be swept away. When the horror of sin is blackest, the judgment which is to sweep it away is nearest at hand. Christ will come again when he will be most needed.—W. F. A.

Vers. 7, 8.—*The mystery of lawlessness.* The exact, objective application of this prediction, like that of the preceding description, is not easy to discover. But principles are involved which are susceptible of general application.

I. THERE IS A MYSTERY OF LAWLESSNESS. By this expression the apostle probably means a mystery the character of which is lawless. 1. *We may expect to meet with new mysteries.* While time and inquiry resolve some mysteries, they bring upon us fresh ones. We are not to expect to be able to understand all the forces and influences with which we are surrounded. It is enough that we are in the hands of God who knows all, and trusting in Christ who can lead us safely through the darkness. 2. *New mysteries may be characterized by new lawlessness.* The answer to our inquiries may be very unsatisfactory in revealing only evil. There are strange novelties which are obscure in all points but their moral character, and that is plainly evil. If so, we may hope for no good from them, and need not further interest ourselves in them. 3. *All lawlessness is mysterious.* How did it originate? How is its existence possible? Why does not God sweep it away? These questions have perplexed men in all ages. We bow before them in helpless, pained wonder.

II. THERE IS A RESTRAINT ON THE MYSTERY OF LAWLESSNESS. 1. *Its full power is not yet revealed.* There are those who treat all sin with unbecoming levity, because they do not yet see its terrible fruits. They are playing with a torpid adder, that may awake at any moment and inflict a fatal wound. No one knows what hidden possibilities of harm lurk in the deep caverns of undeveloped sin. There are volcanoes in the hearts of some quiet men which may burst into destructive fires. 2. *Human means may be used to restrain the mystery of lawlessness.* Government, law, society, healthy habits of the majority, keep it down for a time. 3. *God holds the mystery of lawlessness in check.* He is supreme over its wildest raging. "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh." God restrains the superabundant wrath of man (Ps. lxxvi. 10).

III. THE HIDDEN MYSTERY OF LAWLESSNESS WILL BE REVEALED. The volcano must break into eruption some day. Evil cannot slumber for ever. Hypocrisy will tire of its meek, innocent demeanour. The harvest of sin will have to be reaped. Let not any man put his confidence in the secretness or slowness of the processes of evil. The more they are hidden now, the worse will be the appalling outburst of them when the restraint under which they groan at present is released. The longer the wild horses are held in by the leash, the fiercer will be their mad gallop when they break loose.

IV. CHRIST WILL CONQUER THE MYSTERY OF LAWLESSNESS. Evil will not long be rampant. One fearful rebellion and then a tremendous defeat. 1. *Christ is to be the Conqueror of it.* He came to destroy the works of the devil. We could not effect this great work. He, our Saviour, does it for us. 2. *Christ is to come again for this object.* When the mystery is revealed, Christ's "manifestation" follows. 3. *Christ conquers with a breath.* His first work was difficult, involving his death. His last work will be divinely simple, and yet sublimely successful.—W. F. A.

Vers. 10-12.—*The love of the truth.* The reason for the doom of those who are to be destroyed at the second coming of Christ here given, is that they do not receive the love of the truth.

I. GOD EXPECTS US TO RECEIVE THE LOVE OF THE TRUTH. 1. *Truth is good in*

itself. Truth is to the soul what light is to the body. It is natural for men to love the day, unnatural for them to shun it. In a right and healthy state we should love truth simply as truth, whatever else it be. 2. *Christian truth is peculiarly attractive*. Scientific truth is beautiful, philosophic truth is valuable; but the truth of the gospel has far deeper attractions, because it contains revelation of the love and fatherhood of God, of the grace and goodness of Christ, of the redemption of the world, of the way of salvation, of the heavenly rest, etc. 3. *Truth should be welcomed with love*. We cannot accept it to any advantage until we love it; for (1) love opens our eyes to a sympathetic understanding of it, and (2) love saves us from a cold, barren acceptance of it, and helps us to receive it profitably.

II. IT IS AN EVIL HEART THAT PREVENTS MEN FROM RECEIVING THE LOVE OF THE TRUTH. St. Paul traces back the bad condition of those who reject the love of the truth to the fact that they "had pleasure in unrighteousness." The pleasures of sin cannot exist side by side with the love of the truth. Evil hates the light (John iii. 19). Moral corruption has no sympathy for the lofty thirst for truth of a pure soul. Hence it may be concluded that indifference to truth is a sign of moral evil. The corrupt life is a false life, and its departure from truth reveals the baseness of the character beneath. This is why the rejection of the truth is culpable. Intellectual doubt is of quite a different character. Indeed, it often arises from genuine love of truth, while self-satisfied orthodoxy is often quite indifferent to verifiable facts, preferring respectable error to painful truth.

III. THE PENALTY OF REJECTING THE LOVE OF THE TRUTH IS INCAPACITY TO KNOW TRUTH FROM ERROR. God punishes men in this condition by sending "them a working of error, that they should believe a lie." This is an awful fate. Truth is too precious a pearl to be cast before swine. They who do not love it shall not have it. Liars become incapable of knowing truth. The habit of indifference to truth so grows upon some people that the whole idea of truth becomes obscure and meaningless to them, and they ask with Pilate, half bewildered, half scornful, "What is truth?" Is not this a veritable destruction—the spiritual eye blinded and burnt out by the fires of falsehood and unrighteousness; the highest intellectual faculty, that of grasping truth, killed by corruption and falsehood? God save us all from this hideous doom!—W. F. A.

Vers. 13, 14.—*The Divine work of salvation*. We are to be thankful to God for the happy spiritual prospects of our fellow-Christians, because they all spring from his good purpose and work. The most striking characteristic of the description before us is its attributing the whole process from beginning to end to the will and action of God.

I. THE BEGINNING. 1. *An initial Divine choice*. This dates back to the dim ages of an awful antiquity. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. In the beginning was the Word. In the beginning God chose his people for himself. Salvation is no after-thought coming in to redeem the failure of creation. It was all planned from the first. When God made man he foresaw sin and determined on redemption. Each one of us is thought of by God from the first. We come into the world to fulfil vocations which God designed for us when he first planned the universe. 2. *A present Divine call*. The choice would be of no use if it were not made known to us. But when the time for executing God's great design has arrived, he makes it sufficiently known for us to be able to follow it. He calls by the preaching of the gospel. The gospel, then, is an invitation. It is good news, but only for those who will accept the invitation. This new gospel came to bid men fulfil an ancient destiny. The latest work accomplishes the oldest thought of God.

II. THE PROCESS. 1. *Sanctification of the Spirit*. This is the Divine side of the process. Prior to it is the great atoning work of Christ. But that work is done for us that we may receive the Spirit of God as its fruit. Now we are looking at the work of God in us. God purifies and consecrates his people by an inspiration of his own Spirit. No safety is possible to the guilty, no glory to the unholy. The cleansing process must come before the great end can be reached. 2. *Belief of the truth*. This is our side of the process. It is useless for us to wait for our sanctification and for the baptism of the Holy Spirit which is to produce it. It will not come without our active reception of it. There is no magic about the process of the descent of the Holy Ghost.

It comes on certain conditions being fulfilled by us. (1) *Truth* is the vehicle that conveys it into our hearts. (2) *Faith* is the door in our hearts that opens to receive it.

III. THE END. 1. *Salvation*. Take this word in the largest, roundest sense, as deliverance from all evil. It is painfully true that in our greatest joy and thankfulness we have to recollect that at best we are plucked as brands from the burning. No blessing can be enjoyed till the awful ruin into which our souls were all of them sinking through our great and dreadful sin has been stayed. 2. *Glory*. Salvation is the beginning of God's work in us; glory is the completion of it. We can have no glory while we are in the mire of sin and wretchedness. But when we are delivered, God will not leave us like drowning men on a barren rock, saved from present destruction indeed, but with dreary future prospects. He will not have ended his work with us till he has exalted us into the region of his own glory.—W. F. A.

Vers. 16, 17.—*A benediction*. I. THE SOURCES OF THE BENEDICTION. A true benediction is more than an expression of good wishes. It is a prayer by one who has especial weight in intercession, although it is expressed to the person for whom it is offered. The benediction of so great and good a man as St. Paul is of great value, because the "effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." But the blessings desired by the apostle are not given by him any more than the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to their children were given by the patriarchs. The sources of the blessings of a benediction are not human nor earthly at all. Here they are declared. 1. *The personal influence of Jesus Christ*. This is strikingly expressed by the reference to "our Lord Jesus Christ *himself*." His brotherhood and his love lead him to bless us. His Divinity, his goodness, and his sacrifice give him authority in heaven. In his own right he blesses. And he does not delegate the blessing. He confers it himself. 2. *The fatherhood of God*. Because God is "our Father" we may expect blessings from him. Fears and doubts arise from partial views of God, and views which leave out of account his great fatherly nature. He does not bless as a Master paying wages, but as a Father dealing affectionately with his children.

II. THE ASSURANCES OF THE BENEDICTION. Grounds for believing that God will give the blessing are given for the encouragement of faith. 1. *Love in the past*. He has revealed his character by his providence, and he has proved in this way that he loves his children. But a parent's love is distinguished from all other kinds of love by its permanence. If God ever did love, he still loves. 2. *Eternal comfort*. This we have now in the peace of forgiveness and the rest of faith. The peace is such that the world can neither give nor take away. The rest is beneath the shadow of a great rock that outlasts even the seemingly everlasting hills. 3. *Hope for the future*. God has uttered promises and encouraged hopes. We cannot believe that he will mock the expectations which he has raised.

III. THE OBJECTS OF THE BENEDICTION. 1. *Heart-comfort*. We have eternal comfort; nevertheless we need more comfort. No soul is yet perfectly at rest. Sorrow distresses the most trustful. (1) Observe the *breadth* of the Divine comfort. We may have it in some departments of life and yet miss it in others. The Greek word *paraklesis* has a wider, fuller meaning than our word "comfort." It stands for all help, and help in every direction is what our souls need. (2) Note the *home* of the Divine comfort. It is to be in our hearts. Comfort anywhere else is vain. Comfortable houses, clothes, etc., leave the deepest trouble untouched. The heart may be on a rack when the body is on a downy couch. God's comfort reaches the heart. 2. *Stability in work and word*. We must not stop at comfort. We are consoled in distress that we may be free and strong and glad for service. (1) The service must come from the *heart*. "The heart" is to be established for service. (2) It must be *various and complete*—"every good work." (3) It must extend to speech—"and word." The Scriptures lay great stress on a right use of speech. (4) It must be steadfast. This is the end of the benediction. Eternal comfort must be balanced by steadfast faithfulness.—W. F. A.

EXCURSUS ON THE MAN OF SIN.¹

THIS is one of the most remarkable prophecies in the New Testament. It occurs in the writings of St. Paul, whose practical mind constituted him rather the preacher of the present than the prophet of the future. There is an obscurity in the language which, as already observed, could not have been so great to those to whom the apostle wrote, for he had previously instructed his readers in the nature of the occurrence (ch. ii. 5, 6); but our ignorance of these instructions renders the passage to us enigmatical and difficult to understand; and perhaps, also, this obscurity is increased by reason of our distance from the time when the apostle wrote. There are in this prediction several points requiring consideration: the apostasy or falling away which was secretly working even in the apostle's days; a withholding or restraining influence which prevented its open manifestation and full development; the advent of the man of sin, his characteristics and final doom. We shall, first, give a history of the various opinions concerning this subject in past ages, and then consider those views which are most prevalent in our days.

The following is a literal translation of the passage, in accordance with the exposition given in the foregoing pages: "But we beseech you, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our assembling together unto him, that you be not soon shaken from your *sober* mind, nor be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by epistle as from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord is imminent.² Let no man deceive you by any means, because that day shall not come, except there come the apostasy first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God, or is an object of worship; so that he sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember you not that when I was with you, I told you these things? And now you know what restraineth, that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already working, yet only until he that restraineth is removed;³ and then shall the lawless one be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and annihilate by the appearance of his coming; *even him* whose coming is after the working of Satan, in all power and signs and wonders of falsehood, and in all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish, because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God sends to them the working of error, that they might believe the lie; that they might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

According to these words, this much is evident—that the apostle expected a falling away from the purity of Christianity. Nor is this the only passage where St. Paul alludes to such a declension from primitive faith and holiness; there are allusions to it in his other Epistles, but especially in the Pastoral Epistles, where he describes the apostasy of the latter days: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter

¹ This excursus is chiefly an expansion and revision of a dissertation on "The Man of Sin" in the author's work entitled 'Introduction to the Pauline Epistles.' For dissertations on the Man of Sin, the reader is referred to Alford's 'Greek Testament,' vol. iii., Prolegomena, pp. 55—68, 3rd edit.; Eadie's 'Commentary on the Thessalonians,' pp. 329—367; Elliott's 'Horæ Apocalypticæ,' vol. iii. pp. 91, etc., 5th edit.; Hurd, 'On Prophecy,' vol. ii. pp. 1, etc., 4th edit.; Jowett on the 'Thessalonians,' vol. i. pp. 168—182, 1st edit., pp. 178—194, 2nd edit.; Lünemann's 'Briefe an die Thessalonicher,' pp. 214—229, and the translation of the same, pp. 222, etc.; an article on "Antichrist" by Meyrick, in the appendix to Smith's 'Dictionary of the Bible;' Bishop Newton's 'Dissertation on St. Paul's Prophecy of the Man of Sin;' Riggenbach's dissertation in the Commentary on the Thessalonians in Lange's 'Commentary;' and Wordsworth's 'Greek Testament,' *in loco*.

² Or "is present." (See Exposition.)

³ Revised Version, "For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work: only *there* is one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of the way" (see footnote in the Revised Edition).

times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth" (1 Tim. iv. 1—3). So also, in his Second Epistle to Timothy, he alludes to the impending nature of this period of apostasy—the mystery of lawlessness was already working: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come," or rather, "are present" (2 Tim. iii. 1—5). And St. Peter affirms that there shall arise in the Church false teachers, who shall privily "bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and shall bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2 Pet. ii. 1); and that "in the last days there shall be scoffers, walking after their lusts" (2 Pet. iii. 2). And a similar declaration is made by St. Jude: "Remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts" (Jude 17, 18). And our Lord himself, in his eschatological discourse, warned his disciples that there should arise false Christs and false prophets (Matt. xxiv. 24)—a declaration which probably lies at the root of all similar apocalyptic assertions.¹ In these passages, however, it is to be observed that a plurality of false teachers is asserted; whereas, in our passage, they are concentrated in an individual—the Man of Sin.

Especially in the Epistles of St. John—there is express mention of Antichrist of a person (or persons) who is the opponent of Christ. It is only in these Epistles that the word occurs, and it does so four times: "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that [the] Antichrist shall come, even now there are many Antichrists." "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is Antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son." "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an Antichrist" (1 John ii. 18, 22; iv. 3; 2 John 7). Now, the Man of Sin of St. Paul has been identified with the Antichrist of St. John. They agree in several points: in both he is described as an individual, whose coming will be foreshadowed by many forerunners;² in both his advent is future, but the evil principle, the apostasy or spirit of Antichrist, is already at work; and in both there is open opposition to God and Christ. It is, however, to be observed that in St. John the Antichristian error is more positively stated as consisting in the denial that Jesus Christ came in the flesh,—accordingly, as Gnosticism, which we know was already secretly corrupting the Church; and hence the reason why some have connected the Man of Sin with the errors of the Gnostics, whereas it does not appear from St. Paul's words that the characteristics of the Gnostics correspond with the characteristics of the Man of Sin; but, on the other hand, the denial of the Father and the Son is common to both.

It would far exceed the limits of this excursus to compare the Man of Sin with the declarations concerning the manifestations of evil in the Apocalypse of St. John. In that mysterious book there appears to be two centres or impersonations of evil: the one described as the beast coming out of the sea, to whom the dragon gave his power and seat and great authority (Rev. xiii. 1, 2); and the other, as another beast coming out of the earth, who had two horns like a lamb, and spake like a dragon (Rev. xiii. 11), and who has been identified with the false prophet (Rev. xvi. 13; xix. 20; xx. 10).³ Whether there is a resemblance between the Man of Sin and either or both of these beasts, we do not inquire; in both a manifestation or revelation of evil, and the concentration of it in an individual or individuals, is predicted.

¹ On the connection between Paul's prediction and our Lord's prophecy, see De Wette's "Thessalonicher," p. 188.

² "The mystery of iniquity working," in St. Paul's prophecy; the "many Antichrists" of St. John.

³ Archdeacon Farrar entertains the strange idea that the first beast coming out of the sea is Nero; and the second beast coming out of the earth, or the false prophet, is Vespasian (see articles in the *Expositor*, May and September, 1881).

The prediction of St. Paul bears a still more striking resemblance to the vision of Daniel concerning the wicked and persecuting king (Dan. xi.) than to either the Antichrist of St. John or the beasts of the Apocalypse. That prophecy of Daniel received its primary accomplishment in Antiochus Epiphanes, the great persecutor of the Jews, but the concluding portion is applicable to a future opponent of God and his people, and finds its full accomplishment in him.¹ Now, the imagery employed by the prophet and the apostle is the same. Paul predicts a falling away; and Daniel tells us that the king shall "have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant" (Dan. xi. 30). Paul tells us that the Man of Sin shall sit in the temple of God, displaying himself as God; and Daniel, in the passage quoted by our Lord, speaks of the abomination of desolation being set up in the holy place (Dan. xi. 31). Paul foretells that the Man of Sin shall oppose and exalt himself against all that is called God or is an object of worship; and Daniel tells us that the king shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished (Dan. xi. 36). This resemblance between the persecuting king of Daniel and the Man of Sin is repeatedly noticed by the early Fathers. Thus Origen observes, "What is stated by Paul in the words quoted by him when he says, 'so he sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God,' is in Daniel referred to in the following manner: 'And on the temple shall be the abomination of desolation, and at the end of time an end shall be put to the desolation'" (Origen, 'Contra. Cels.,' vi. 46).² There can hardly, then, be a reasonable doubt that Paul in his prediction had this prophecy of Daniel in view.³

The prediction of St. Paul concerning the Man of Sin made a deep impression upon the early Fathers, and the references to it in their writings are numerous. There is also a comparative unanimity in their sentiments. In general, they considered that the fulfilment of the prediction was future; that the Man of Sin was Antichrist, and an individual; and that the restraining influence was the Roman empire. Justin Martyr speaks of the Man of Sin as the man of apostasy, who speaks strange things against the Most High, and shall venture to do unlawful deeds on earth against Christians ('Dial. cum Tryph.,' c. 110). Irenæus observes "that he, being an apostate and a robber, is anxious to be adored by God; and that, although a mere slave, he wishes himself to be proclaimed as a king. For he, being endued with the power of the devil, shall come, not as a righteous king in subjection to God, but as the lawless one; concentrating in himself all Satanic apostasy, and, setting aside all idols, he shall persuade men that he himself is God" ('Adv. Hær.,' v. 25. 1). Tertullian alludes to the Roman empire as the restraining power: "What obstacle is there but the Roman state, the falling away of which shall introduce Antichrist, for then shall be revealed the lawless one?" ('De Resurr.,' c. 24). And again, "We Christians are under peculiar necessity of praying for the emperors and for the complete stability of the empire, because we know that dreadful power which hangs over the world and the conclusion of the age, which threatens the most horrible evils, is only retarded by the continued existence of the Roman empire. This is what we would not experience. And, while we pray that it may be deferred, we hereby show our good will to the perpetuity of the Roman state" ('Apol.,' c. 32). Hippolytus supposes that Antichrist will be a Jew, belonging to the tribe of Dan:⁴ "As Christ springs from the tribe of Judah, so Antichrist is to spring from the tribe of Dan" ('De Antichristo,' c. 14). Cyprian regards Antiochus Epiphanes as the type of Antichrist ('Exhort. ad Martyr.,' c. 11). And Jerome

¹ The Jews considered Antiochus Epiphanes as the type of Antichrist, to whom they gave the name of Armillus. Thus the Targum translates Isa. xi. 4, "By the breath of his mouth he shall slay Armillus, the wicked one." According to the Jewish notions, Armillus shall appear in the last days; he shall be born of a marble statue in one of the churches of Rome; the Romans shall acknowledge him as their Messiah, and accept him as their king; he shall make war with Israel, and in the battle that will ensue Messiah ben Joseph will be slain; but Messiah ben David shall appear, and utterly destroy Armillus and his followers.

² See also Irenæus, 'Adv. Hær.,' v. 25. 3.

³ For the resemblance between this prediction of Paul and the prophecy of Daniel, see Jowett on 'St. Paul's Epistles,' vol. i. p. 174, etc., 1st edit.; Hofmann's 'Schriftbeweis,' vol. ii. p. 614, etc.

⁴ The same opinion is entertained by Irenæus, 'Adv. Hær.,' v. 30. 2.

observes, "As the Saviour had Solomon and other saints as types of his coming, so we may rightly believe that Antichrist had, as a type of himself, that most wicked king Antiochus, who persecuted the saints and profaned the temple" (on Dan. xi. 35). There was a diversity of opinion among them regarding the meaning of the temple of God, in which the Man of Sin was to seat himself. Some of the Fathers (Chrysostom, Theodoret, Augustine, Jerome) interpreted the expression figuratively as denoting the Christian Church; whilst others (Irenæus, Cyril) took it literally, and referred it to the temple of Jerusalem, supposing that the Man of Sin would rebuild the temple.

It was an opinion in the early Church, continuing even to the date of the fourth century, that Nero was Antichrist. Of course, such an opinion cannot refer to the Man of Sin, as this would involve an anachronism; but can only be applied to Antichrist as described in the Apocalypse. Too much has been made of this Nero myth, as it is seldom alluded to by the early Fathers until the close of the third century. Nero was the first emperor who persecuted the Christians, and was therefore peculiarly obnoxious to them. After his death, there was a general impression throughout the Roman world that he was not really dead, but was living in concealment in Parthia, and would return to regain his empire. "About this time," observes Tacitus, "a report that Nero was still alive, and on his way to the East, excited a false alarm throughout Achaia and Asia" ('Hist.,' ii. 8). And Suetonius mentions that it was thought that Nero was still alive, and would shortly return to Rome, and take vengeance on all his enemies ('Nero,' 57). Mention is made in history of three impostors who personated Nero: one in Achaia and Proconsular Asia, in the reign of Otho; a second, also in Proconsular Asia, in the reign of Titus; and a third, protected by the Parthians, in the reign of Domitian. From this notion appears to have arisen the Christian idea that Nero would be again raised up as Antichrist.¹ The earliest notice of this opinion appears in the fourth of the Sybilline books (A.D. 80), which, however, is considered by critics to be not of Christian, but of Jewish origin. In the fifth Sybilline book, supposed to be of the time of Hadrian (A.D. 130), according to some by a Jewish Christian, and according to others by an Egyptian Jew, the Antichrist Beliar is identified with Nero.² Not until the close of the third century (A.D. 290) does Victorinus, Bishop of Pettan, in his exposition of the Apocalypse, identify the beast rising out of the sea with Nero: "Now that one of the heads was, as it were, slain to death, in this he speaks of Nero;" and Chrysostom regarded Nero as the type of Antichrist.³ The great reason, however, on which certain writers ground their opinion that the author of the Apocalypse considered Nero to be Antichrist, was the declaration contained in Rev. xvii. 10, 11, "And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast which was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition"—a passage referred to by Victorinus.⁴ By the five kings they understand the five emperors who had already reigned—Augustus, Tiberius, Caius, Claudius, and Nero; by the sixth, Galba (or, according to others, Vespasian: Galba, Otho, and Vitellius being omitted, as their reigns were short); by the seventh, Otho (or, according to others, Titus); and by the eighth, who was also one of the seven, Antichrist or Nero restored to life. This passage is still appealed to by recent writers who adopt the Nero hypothesis.⁵ Lactantius (A.D. 306),

¹ See Merivale's 'History of the Romans under the Empire,' cabinet edit., vol. vii. pp. 50, etc., 348, etc.

² See, on the Sybilline oracles and their probable age, Drummond's 'Jewish Messiah,' pp. 10—16. According to Friedlieb, both the fourth and the fifth books are of Jewish origin.

³ Lardner's Works, vol. ii. p. 94.

⁴ Victorinus supposes the five kings who had fallen to be Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian, and Titus; the sixth, Domitian; the seventh, Nerva; and the eighth, Antichrist or Nero.

⁵ As Lücke Ewald, Bleek, De Wette, Renan, Immer, Düsterdieck, and Archdeacon Farrar. Düsterdieck and Archdeacon Farrar (who, however, appears undecided) suppose that the eighth king is Domitian, who came as Nero in spirit, and who was also called Nero. Most of these writers suppose that Augustus was the first emperor, though no sufficient reason can be assigned for the exclusion of Julius Cæsar. Renan commences with Julius Cæsar, and, according to him, Nero was the sixth emperor, whom the author of the Apocalypse

on the other hand, repudiates this hypothesis as extravagant: "Some persons of extravagant imagination," he observes, "suppose that Nero, having been conveyed to a distant region, is still alive; and to him they apply the Sybilline verses concerning 'the fugitive who slew his own mother, being to come from the uttermost boundaries of the earth;' as if he who was the first, shall also be the last persecutor, and thus prove the forerunner of Antichrist. But we ought not to believe those who, affirming that the two prophets, Enoch and Elijah, have been translated into some remote place, that they might attend our Lord when he shall come to the judgment, also fancy that Nero is to appear hereafter as the forerunner of the devil, when he shall come to lay waste the earth and overthrow mankind."¹

The opponents of hierarchical power in the Middle Ages regarded the pope as Antichrist, and considered the passage in question as a prediction of the origin and growth of the papal authority. Thus as early as the close of the tenth century (A.D. 991), Arnulph, Bishop of Orleans, declared at the Council of Rheims that if the Roman pontiff was destitute of charity, and puffed up with knowledge, he was Antichrist. This view was entertained by Robert Grosstête the celebrated Bishop of Lincoln, by Savonarola, by the Albigenses, the Waldenses, Wickliffe and the Wickliffites, the Hussites, and all those sects who were in opposition to the Roman hierarchy. Even St. Bernard uses this bold language: "The ministers of Christ are become the servants of Antichrist, and the beast of the Apocalypse has seated himself in the chair of St. Peter."²

The Reformers in general adopted this opinion. Such was the view of Luther, Calvin, Zuinglius, Melancthon, Beza, and Bucer; and, among English Reformers, Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Hooper, and Jewell. According to them, the apostasy is the falling away from evangelical doctrine to the traditions of men and the corruptions of popery; the Man of Sin, or Antichrist, is not, as the Fathers conceived, an individual, but the succession of popes—*series et successio hominum*; and the restraining power is the Roman empire, out of whose ruins the papacy arose. The Lutheran Church inserted this opinion as an article in their creed (Articl. Smalc., ii. 4). In the dedication of the translators of the Authorized Version to King James, it is assumed that the pope is the Man of Sin; and that monarch is complimented for writing in the defence of the truth, which gave "such a blow unto that Man of Sin as will not be healed." And the assertion that the pope is Antichrist and the Man of Sin forms one of the articles of the Westminster Confession: "There is no other head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ; nor can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof, but is that Antichrist, that Man of Sin and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the Church against Christ and all that is called God" (ch. xxv. 6).

The Romanists, on the other hand, were naturally led by opposition to consider the passage as a prediction of the rise and growth of Protestantism. The apostasy was the falling away from the Romish Church by the doctrines of the Reformation. The Man of Sin denoted heretics in general, but especially Luther, the chief of the Reformers. The restraining influence was the German empire, considered as a continuation of the Roman empire. This, however, was not the general opinion of the Church of Rome; most of their theologians supposed that Antichrist, or the Man of Sin, was an individual whose coming is yet future.

The Greek Church was naturally led to regard the prophecy as a prediction of Mohammedanism; the apostasy was the falling away of many Greek and Oriental Churches to Mohammedanism; the man of sin was Mohammed; and the restraining influence the power of the Roman empire.³ Some of the Reformers (Melancthon, Bucer, Musculus) considered that there were two Antichrists—one belonging to the Eastern Church and the other to the Western; the Eastern Antichrist was Mohammed, and the

erroneously supposed to be alive. (See a most interesting note on this Nero fable by Archdeacon Lee, in the 'Speaker's Commentary,' New Testament, vol. iv. p. 759, etc. See also Bleek's 'Lectures on the Apocalypse,' p. 86, etc.; Düsterdieck's 'Offenbarung Johannis,' p. 521, etc.)

¹ Lactantius, 'De Mortibus Persecutorum,' c. ii.

² Quoted by Bishop Hurd, 'On Prophecy,' vol. ii. pp. 28, 29.

³ Innocent III. endeavoured to stir up a crusade by the declaration that Mohammed was the Man of Sin.

Western was the pope. It is a remarkable circumstance that all three—the Greeks, the Romans, and the Protestants—were at one as regards the restraining influence; this they regarded as the imperial power—the Roman empire, either in itself or continued in the Greek and German empires.

The modern views concerning the Man of Sin are chiefly four: the Rationalists, who consider that there is no prophecy; the Præterists, who consider the prophecy as already fulfilled; the Progressionists, who regard it as being fulfilled or in the course of fulfilment; and the Futurists, who regard the fulfilment as still future.

1. The first class of expositors are those who regard all the usual interpretations as proceeding from a false assumption as if there were a prophecy, whereas there is in reality no prediction at all. This opinion is adopted by Koppe, Pelt, De Wette, Lünemann, Jowett, and Davidson. Koppe appears to have been the earliest who took this view of the passage. He idealizes the prediction, and supposes that the apostle is only stating his impressions of what might be the future state of the Church from a consideration of the times in which he lived. The apostle was profoundly impressed with the prophecies of Daniel, and from them he dreaded an outburst of evil after his death, and he expressed his forebodings in language coloured from Daniel. Pelt supposes that the mystery of iniquity was the inward principle of evil which the apostle foresaw would afterwards break forth in a more open and violent form; that the restraining power was the will of God holding back the kingdom of Satan; and that the coming of Christ was the final victory of good over evil. So also De Wette observes, "He goes altogether wrong who finds here any more than the apostle's subjective anticipation, from his own historical position, of the future of the Christian Church. Instead of rising to the example of Christ, acknowledging the limitation which there is to a definite foreknowledge of the future, the apostle pays a tribute to human weakness, since he wanted to know too much beforehand."¹ Lünemann considers that Paul was so entirely engrossed by his ideas of the proximity of the advent that, carried away by his individuality, he "wished to settle more exactly concerning its circumstances and conditions the historical relations of the coming of Christ than is allotted to man in general to know, even although he should be the apostle, the most filled with the Spirit of God."² "Such passages [Col. ii. 8, 16; Eph. vi. 12]," observes Professor Jowett, "are a much safer guide to the interpretation of the one we are considering than the meaning of similar passages in the Old Testament. For they indicate to us the habitual thought of the apostle's mind; 'a falling away first,' suggested, probably, by the wavering which he saw among his own converts, the grievous wolves entering into the Church of Ephesus (Acts xx. 29), the turning away of all them of Asia (2 Tim. i. 15). When we consider that his own converts and Jewish opponents or half-converts were all the world to him; that through them, as it were in a glass, he appeared to see the workings of human nature generally, we understand how this double image of good and evil should have presented itself to him, and the kind of necessity that he felt that Christ and Antichrist should alternate with each other. It was not that he foresaw some great conflict, decisive of the destinies of mankind. What he anticipated for man nearly resembled the spiritual combat in the seventh chapter of the Romans."³ And Dr. Davidson remarks, "The passage does not contain a prophecy, but rather the writer's notion on a subject which did not concern the proper faith and duty of mankind. Those notions were shaped by the floating belief of his day, and have nothing beyond an historical interest. They belong to the past of Christianity—to its infantine state, when it was emerging out of Judaism, and assuming that independent position to which no man contributed so much as the apostle of the Gentiles."⁴

Such a view is at variance with the idea of inspiration—in other words, with the supposition that the apostle was guided in writing by a higher Spirit than his own. The supernatural is entirely overlooked; the apostle writes according to his own fancies;

¹ De Wette, however, expresses himself very differently, in the preface to his exposition of the Apocalypse; there he recognizes the symptoms of Antichrist in the God-denying egoism of our day, with its rejection of all restraints.

² Lünemann, 'Briefe an die Thessalonicher,' pp. 229, 230, translation of the same, p. 237.

³ Jowett's 'St. Paul's Epistles,' vol. i. p. 177, 1st edit.

⁴ Davidson's 'Introduction to the New Testament,' vol. i. p. 14 (new edit.).

he is led astray by his erroneous opinions. How such a view is "entirely consistent with the apostle's inspiration" is difficult to understand, even although we employ the term "inspiration" in a very broad sense. The power of foretelling the future is denied to the sacred writers. "We take them," observes Dr. Davidson, "as guides to faith and practice generally without adopting all that they propounded, or believing that they could foretell events."¹ It is evident the apostle is here giving a prediction of what shall take place; and therefore, if there were no real prediction, he was on this point mistaken and in error, and consequently uninspired. If we admit inspiration, we must receive the truths declared as the revelation of God: the Scripture contains truths to be received, and not the mere opinions of fallen men to be canvassed.

2. The second class of interpreters are those who, recognizing a prediction, regard it as already fulfilled. To this class belong Grotius, Wetstein, Hammond, Le Clerc, Whitby, Schöttgen, Wieseler, Kern, Döllinger, and Baumgarten. These generally agree in considering that the prophecy received its accomplishment in Christ's coming in spirit to destroy Jerusalem, although they differ widely in details. Grotius supposes that the Man of Sin was Caligula, who demanded supreme and universal worship as god, and ordered his statue to be placed in the temple of Jerusalem; he who restrained was Vitellius, the Proconsul of Syria, who, at the risk of his life, refused to obey the order of Caligula; and the lawless one was Simon Magus. It seemed to Paul that the delineation of Antiochus Epiphanes in Daniel was to be realized in Caligula.² But the distinction between the Man of Sin and the lawless one is incorrect, and besides, the interpretation involves an anachronism, as the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians was written after the death of Caligula. Wetstein adopts the extravagant opinion that the Man of Sin was Titus, "the delight of the human race," whose army brought their idolatrous ensigns into the captured temple and offered sacrifices there; and that the restraining influence was Nero, that monster of iniquity, whose death was necessary for the rule of Titus. Hammond imagined that, by the Man of Sin, Simon Magus, together with his followers the Gnostics, was meant; the apostasy was the falling away of the Christians into Gnosticism; and the restraining influence was the apostles, who, by still preaching to the Jews, preserved the union still subsisting between Jews and Christians.³ Le Clerc supposes that the apostasy was the revolt of the Jews from the Romans; the Man of Sin was the rebellious Jews, and especially their leader Simon the son of Giora; and the restraining power was the chief of the Jewish nation, who were against the revolt. Whitby also considers the apostasy was the revolt of the Jews from the Roman empire or from the faith; the Man of Sin was the Jewish nation, with their high priest and Sanhedrim; and the restraining power was Claudius, during whose reign the Jews would not rebel, as they were under great obligations to him.⁴ Schöttgen also agrees with Whitby in considering that by the Man of Sin is meant the Pharisees, the rabbis, and the doctors of the Law; but he differs from him in considering that the restraining power was the prayers of the Christians, which warded off the destruction of Jerusalem until they had left the city and retired to Pella. Much more ingenious is the opinion of Wieseler. He also considers the prophecy as a prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem. "He that restraineth" must be some good influence which delayed the catastrophe, and this he considers to be the pious Jews then living, particularly the Christians; and if the singular number requires an individual, then the restrainer is James the Just, the Lord's brother. Not until James was murdered and the Christians had removed from Jerusalem was the city taken.⁵ Kern considers that the Man of Sin is Nero; he that restraineth is Vespasian and his son Titus; and the apostasy is the revolt of the Jews or the departure of the Christians.⁶ Döllinger, like Kern, supposes Antichrist to be Nero. Nero was already adopted by Claudius, and was regarded by many as the future Caesar. "He that restraineth" was Claudius. The coming of Christ was his coming to

¹ Davidson's 'Introduction to the New Testament,' vol. i. p. 15 (new edit.).

² Grotius, 'Annotations in II. Epistolam ad Thessal.'

³ Hammond on the New Testament, *in loco*.

⁴ Whitby's 'Commentary,' pp. 813—818. London: Thomas Tegg, 1842.

⁵ Wieseler's 'Chronologie des apostolischen Zeitalters,' pp. 268—277.

⁶ Kern, on this account, considers the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians to be spurious. The same view is maintained by Baur, Hilgenfeld, and others belonging to the Tübingen school.

execute judgment on Jerusalem; and although Nero did not personally undertake anything against the Jews, yet he did so by his lieutenant Vespasian. The apostasy was the departure of the Christians into the errors of the Gnostics. Döllinger, however, considers that there may be a more complete fulfilment in the last days.¹ Baumgarten thinks that the prophecy reflects the experience of the apostle: the Man of Sin was the Jews who everywhere opposed his preaching the gospel; the apostasy was the renunciation of Jesus as the Messiah; and the restraining influence was the imperial authority which hitherto had protected the apostle and kept the Jews in check. This opinion appears to be partially adopted by Bishop Lightfoot: "It seems, upon the whole, probable," he observes, "that the Antichrist is represented especially by Judaism. With a prophetic insight, the apostle foresaw, as he contemplated the moral and political condition of the race, the approach of a great and overwhelming catastrophe. . . . It was to Roman justice and Roman magistrates that the apostle had recourse at this time to shield him from the enmity of the Jews and to check their violence."² At the same time, he thinks that the prophecy has not yet received its most striking and complete fulfilment.

It would be a mere waste of time to examine these views *seriatim*. So far as they consider the prophecy as having received its full accomplishment, they do not satisfy its conditions, and have only a general and fancied resemblance. Especially it is fatal to the views of this class of interpreters that the coming of Christ alluded to is evidently not his coming in spirit to destroy Jerusalem, but, as the context shows, and as is the uniform meaning of the phrase in the Epistles of Paul, his coming in person to establish his spiritual kingdom.

3. The third class of exponents are those who regard the prophecy as being fulfilled, or as in the course of fulfilment; that is, as already partially fulfilled, but awaiting its complete accomplishment: we allude to those who find in the passage a prediction of popery. Besides the early Reformers, this opinion is advocated by Hooker, Hurd, Newton, Turretin, Benson, Bengel, Doddridge, Macknight, Michaelis, Elliott, and Bishop Wordsworth.

This opinion proceeds on the assumption that the restraining influence is the Roman empire. In the prediction, that influence is both masculine and neuter; by the masculine the emperor is meant, and by the neuter the empire. This opinion is that of the early Fathers, and was generally adopted with various modifications by Greeks, Romanists, and Protestants.³ It is in itself highly probable, and may have been handed down by tradition from the Church of Thessalonica, who had been instructed concerning its nature (ch. ii. 6). If the restrainer was the Roman emperor, we may understand the reason of the reserve of the apostle. If he had stated this in so many words, he would have been regarded as an enemy to the Roman government, because he would then teach the destruction of the empire, and would have involved Christians in persecution. Prudence required a discreet silence on this point. This reason for reserve was recognized by the early Fathers. "If St. Paul," observes Chrysostom, "had said that the Roman empire will soon be dissolved, the heathen world would have destroyed him as a rebel and all the faithful with him, as persons who took up arms against the state. But St. Paul means the Roman empire; and when that shall have been taken away, then the Man of Sin will come. For as the power of Babylon was dissolved by the Persian dynasty, and the Persian was supplanted by the Greek, and the Greek by the Roman, so the Roman will be dissolved by Antichrist, and Antichrist by Christ" (*in loco*). Now, in the view of those who regard the pope as the Man of Sin, this prediction was fully verified. No sooner was the restrainer removed than the Man of Sin was revealed. As long as the Roman emperor continued heathen and resident at Rome, no ecclesiastical power was permitted to exalt itself; but no sooner did the

¹ For Döllinger's views, see Lünemann, 'On the Thessalonians,' p. 232; and Riggensbach in Lange's 'Commentary.'

² Smith's 'Dictionary of the Bible,' article "Second Epistle to the Thessalonians."

³ To this general opinion the view of Calvin is a notable exception. He supposes that the restraining influence was the limited diffusion of the gospel, and that the Man of Sin was not to be manifested until the gospel was preached to the whole world. "This, therefore, was the delay until the career of the gospel should be completed, because a gracious invitation to salvation was first in order" (Calvin, *in loco*).

emperor remove from Rome to Constantinople, than the papacy arose—the restraint on the Bishop of Rome was removed; and after the Roman empire in the West came to an end by the dethronement of Augustulus, the power of the pope mightily increased.

But the great point of inquiry is—Is there a sufficient resemblance between this prophecy and Romanism, so that we may conclude that they are related to each other as prediction and fulfilment? Are the characteristics of the Man of Sin found in popery? Those who belong to this class of interpreters assert that the resemblance is striking and obvious. An apostasy is predicted, and there is in Romanism a falling away from the pure gospel to the traditions of men; the doctrines of purgatory, transubstantiation, the sacrifice of the Mass, the adoration of the Virgin and the saints, are adduced as examples. The Man of Sin is represented as opposing and exalting himself against all that is called God or is an object of worship; and this is considered as receiving its fulfilment in the pope exalting himself above all human and Divine authority, claiming the title “king of kings, and lord of lords,” applying to himself the words of the psalmist, “All kings shall bow down before thee,” styling himself universal bishop,¹ and asserting his power to dispose of the kingdoms of the earth. The Man of Sin is said to seat himself in the temple of God, showing himself as God. The temple of God is here understood to be the Christian Church, and the pope places himself in it as its supreme head, the vicar of Jesus Christ. He shows himself as God by claiming Divine attributes, as holiness and infallibility; assuming Divine prerogatives, as the power of pardoning sins and the opening and shutting of the kingdom of heaven; and using such Divine titles as “Our Lord God the pope,” “Another God on earth.”² Every pope, on his election, is placed on the high altar of St. Peter’s, and receives the adoration of the cardinals. The coming of the Man of Sin is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and wonders of falsehood. And this is considered as receiving its fulfilment in the false miracles of popery; in the impositions of indulgences and purgatory; in the wonders done by sacred images moving, speaking, bleeding; in the prodigies effected by sacred relics; in the supernatural visitations of the Virgin; and in the pretended power of working miracles which the Church of Rome still claims; as Bellarmine reckons the glory of miracles as the eleventh mark of the Catholic Church. God is represented as punishing sin by sin, “sending to them the working of error that they might believe the lie.” The popish legends, which have gained such credit as to be admitted among their ceremonies, and especially the monstrous doctrine of transubstantiation, are regarded as the fulfilment of this part of the prophecy.³ And, besides, in the other passage where Paul predicts the falling away of the latter times, the marks which he gives find their counterpart in the corruption of popery: “Giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats” (1 Tim. iv. 1-3).

Paul represents the system as working even in his days: “For the mystery of lawlessness is already working” (ch. ii. 7). It works inwardly; it is a mystery, something concealed and unknown until it is revealed; the germs of the Antichristian system were already in the Church; the leaven of corruption was at work. Paul knew this because he was inspired by the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost can see what man cannot see (Wordsworth). But, in truth, the germs of the Antichristian system are discernible in the false doctrines and superstitious practices alluded to in Paul’s Epistles; and it is asserted that there is a striking resemblance between them and the doctrines and practices of Romanism; as, for example, the worship of angels (Col. ii. 8), the

¹ In the remarkable words of Gregory the Great, in opposition to the Patriarch of Constantinople, “Whoever calls himself universal bishop is the precursor of Antichrist.”

² These and such-like titles are cited in Jewell’s ‘Apology,’ Poole’s ‘Annotations,’ Newton, ‘On the Prophecies.’ See also Barrow’s ‘Treatise on the Pope’s Supremacy,’ Stillingfleet, ‘On Popery,’ ch. xviii.; and Luthardt’s ‘Saving Truths of Christianity,’ pp. 395, 396.

³ “The annals of the world,” observes Dr. Macknight, “cannot produce persons and events to which the things written in this passage can be applied with so much fitness as to the history of Rome. Why, then, should we be in any doubt concerning the interpretation and application of this passage to popery?”

abstinence from certain foods (1 Cor. viii. 8), bodily mortification (Col. ii. 23), the traditions and doctrines and commandments of men (Col. ii. 8, 22); so that, as Bishop Newton observes, "the foundations of popery were laid, indeed, in the apostles' days, but the superstructure was raised by degrees, and several ages passed before the building was completed, and the Man of Sin was revealed in full perfection."¹

Of course, according to this view of the subject, the complete fulfilment of the prophecy is still future. The destruction of the Man of Sin—that is, according to this view, Romanism—is also predicted: "Whom the Lord Jesus will slay with the breath of his mouth, and annihilate by the appearance of his coming" (ch. ii. 8). We have shown, in the Exposition, that by this cannot be meant the preaching of the pure gospel, or the diffusion of the Word of God at the Reformation; the language is denunciatory. As, however, this portion of the prophecy is unfulfilled, it is not required to offer any explanations. The interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy is probably beyond the powers of the human mind; the fulfilment is the only key to the interpretation.

To this view of the subject numerous objections have been raised: there are three which merit consideration. (1) It is affirmed that the Man of Sin is distinctly asserted to be an individual; he is called "the lawless one," "the son of perdition;" whereas, according to the above view, he is an ecclesiastical system, or a succession of individuals. But, as Bishop Lightfoot observes, "in all figurative passages it is arbitrary to assume that a person is denoted when we find a personification. Thus the Man of Sin here need not be an individual man; it may be a body of men, or a power, or a spiritual influence."² The restraining influence, which is put at one time in the neuter and at another time in the masculine, is almost universally acknowledged to be, not a person, but an influence or series of persons. So, in like manner, the Man of Sin may be a succession of individuals; at least, there is no absolute necessity arising from the terms of the prophecy to regard him as a person.³ (2) It is affirmed that, even admitting all the striking coincidences, yet the idea of popery does not and never did fulfil the prophecy in ver. 4. So far from the pope opposing and exalting himself against all that is called God or is an object of worship, his "abject adoration and submission to them has ever been one of his most notable peculiarities"⁴ (Alford). But to this it has been replied that the arrogance of the pope, his assertion that he is the vicar of Christ, his claim of infallibility, which has lately been conceded to him, are a distinct fulfilment of this prediction. (3) It is said that "if the papacy be Antichrist, then has the manifestation been made and endured now for nearly fifteen hundred years, and yet the day of the Lord has not come, which, by the terms of our prophecy, such manifestation is immediately to precede" (Alford). But to this it has been answered that it is not asserted that the coming of Christ follows directly on the coming of the Man of Sin, but merely that the Man of Sin will precede; the interval between the two comings is nowhere defined. Besides, it may be that there is a development of Antichrist, and that his final destruction by the coming of the Lord will not occur until his full development. Thus, for example, the spiritual power of popery may be unfolding itself; the mystery of lawlessness may be still working, as was lately seen in the introduction of two new dogmas into the Romish Church—the immaculate conception of the Virgin, and the personal infallibility of the pope. The career of the Man of Sin has not yet run.

Upon the whole, on an impartial review of the subject, we cannot avoid the impression that the points of resemblance between the prophecy and Romanism are numerous, varied, and striking. Our forefathers had no doubt as to the application of the prediction, and perhaps they were nearer the truth than we in modern times who hesitate. Such an opinion may be considered as uncharitable and unjust, and is certainly not in accordance with the more liberal spirit of our age, where popery is viewed as it presently exists, divested of its power to persecute, and as seen in the culture, refinement, and piety of many of its adherents. But when we reflect upon

¹ Bishop Newton's 'Dissertation on the Man of Sin.'

² Smith's 'Dictionary of the Bible,' article 'Epistles to the Thessalonians.'

³ See Elliott's 'Horæ Apocalyptice,' vol. iii. p. 956, 5th edit.; Newton, 'On the Prophecies.'

⁴ Alford's 'Greek Testament,' vol. iii., Prolegomena, p. 66.

the abominable persecutions of the Inquisition, the monstrous wickedness of the popes prior to the Reformation,¹ the atrocities perpetrated in the name of religion,² the crimes committed by the priests,³ and the general corruption of the whole system; and when we think that it is only the restraining influence of Protestantism which prevents a repetition of such actions, we may see reason, if not to affirm positively, yet to suspect that such an opinion may be founded on truth, and, if so, be neither uncharitable nor unjust.

4. The fourth class of interpreters consider the fulfilment as future, and that we are not to look for any past occurrences as answering all its requirements. This opinion is the one which is chiefly favoured in our days. It has been adopted by Hofmann, Ewald, Olshausen, Riggenbach, Lange, Alford, Ellicott, Lillie, Eadie, Meyrick, and Bishop Alexander, although there is a considerable difference in their views.

It is maintained that it is unwarrantable to consider the pope as Antichrist, and the papacy as an Antichristian system. The essential doctrines of Christianity are maintained and defended by the Romanists. The cross of Christ is exalted, and his sufferings are declared to be an atonement for sin. The great doctrine of the Trinity is not only maintained, but prominently brought forward. The influences of the Spirit are recognized and depended on. And the pope, instead of opposing himself to God, owns himself to be the servant and worshipper of God.⁴ Hence it is considered that in the future there may be a fuller completion than has ever yet taken place in the past. Prophecy has many partial fulfilments, until it reaches its climax in a complete accomplishment. Thus the Messianic prophecies of our Lord were partially fulfilled in David, in Solomon, in the Jewish nation. So it may be with this prediction; its final application may be reserved for the last days of this world's probation. The anti-Christian elements, which are now found dispersed, may be collected and exhibited in an individual who will be the realization of the Man of Sin.

According to Hofmann, the whole passage refers to the visions of Daniel. Paul applies the prophecy therein contained to the latter days. The power that restraineth the outburst of evil is a good principle; just as Michael, the guardian angel of the Jews, withstood the Prince of Persia (Dan. x. 20). When the good principle which was preserving the world in agreement with God is removed, then Antichrist will appear in the form of some mighty lawless conqueror. Hofmann appears actually to expect the revivification of Antiochus Epiphanes.⁵ Ewald, again, applies to the prophecy the prediction of Malachi concerning the coming of Elijah. He supposes that by that which hinders the appearance of Antichrist the coming of Elijah is meant, and that Antichrist will not be revealed in all his atrocious wickedness until Elijah be taken out of the way and again translated to heaven.⁶

Omitting these interpretations, which must appear to our English minds fanciful and extravagant, based on mere conjecture, and wholly arbitrary in their nature, we come to the more rational statements of other divines. In general, according to them, the Man of Sin is an individual of gigantic mental power, enormous daring, and extreme wickedness, who shall appear on the earth in the latter days; and the restraining influence which prevents the appearance of such an individual is moral order or government. Thus, according to Olshausen, the Man of Sin is an individual. All the manifestations of evil, the revolt of the Jews from the Romans, Nero, Mohammed, the development of the papacy in the Middle Ages, the French Revolution of 1789, with the abolition of Christianity, and the setting up of a prostitute as the goddess of Reason in the cathedral church of Paris, and the present diffusion of infidelity and atheism, are the precursors of Antichrist; but they contain only some of his characteristics, not all. Similarly Dean Alford observes, "Though eighteen hundred years later, we stand, with regard to this prophecy, where the apostle stood; the day of the Lord not present, and not to arrive until the Man of Sin be manifested; the mystery of iniquity still

¹ As, for example, Sixtus IV., Innocent VIII., Alexander VII.

² The massacre of St. Bartholomew.

³ See Froude's 'The English in Ireland,' bk. iii. ch. i. sect. 2.

⁴ See Eadie, 'On the Thessalonians,' p. 353.

⁵ Hofmann's 'Thessalonicher,' p. 333.

⁶ Ewald's 'Sendschreiber der Apostel Paulus,' p. 27.

⁷ Olshausen, 'On the Thessalonians,' pp. 488, 489, Clark's translation.

working, and much advanced in its working; the restrainer still hindering. And let us ask ourselves—What does this represent to us? Is it not indicative of a state in which the lawlessness is working on, so to speak, underground, under the surface of things, gaining throughout these many ages more expansive force, more accumulated power, but still hidden and unconcentrated? And might we not look, in the progress of such a state of things, for repeated minor embodiments of this lawlessness; the many Antichrists (1 John ii. 18) springing up here and there in different countries, the apostasy going onward and growing, just as there were of Christ himself frequent types and minor embodiments before he came in the flesh? Thus in the papacy, where so many of the prophetic features are combined, we see, as it were, a standing embodiment and type of the final Antichrist—in the remarkable words of Gregory the Great, the *precursor Antichristi*; and in Nero, and in every persecutor as he arose, and Mahomet, and Napoleon, and many other forms and agencies of evil, other and more transient types and examples of him.”¹ And Bishop Ellicott remarks, “The adversary is Antichrist, no mere set of principles or succession of opponents, but one single person, being as truly man as he whom he impiously opposes.” And he observes, “The restraining principle is the power of well-ordered human rule, the principles of legality as opposed to those of lawlessness, of which the Roman emperor was the then embodiment and manifestation.”² Similar views are adopted by Bishop Alexander,³ Dr. Eadie, Lillie,⁴ and Riggenbach. Meyrick, in his interesting and exhaustive article on “Antichrist,” in the appendix to Smith’s ‘Dictionary of the Bible,’ thus expresses his view of the sum of Scripture teaching with regard to Antichrist: “It would appear that there is to be evolved from the womb of the corrupt Church an individual Antichrist, who, being himself a scoffer and contemner of all religion, will yet act as the patron and defender of the corrupt Church, and compel men to submit to her sway by the force of the secular arm and by means of bloody persecutions. He will unite the old foes, superstition and unbelief, in a combined attack on liberty and religion. He will have the power of performing lying miracles and beguiling souls, being the embodiment of Satanic as distinct from brutal wickedness.” Or, as Lange puts it, “Antichrist may proceed from a coalition between completed absolutism and completed radicalism.”

Of course, according to this view, the fulfilment being yet future, we cannot apply to its truth or falsehood the characteristics given us in the prophecy itself. It appears to be the uniform doctrine of Scripture, as seen both in the prophecies of the Old Testament and of the New, that before the consummation of all things there will be a final and desperate struggle between the principles of good and evil. The revolt against all rule and authority, the spread of Nihilism, the increase of infidelity and agnosticism, the unblushing proclamation of atheism and the support given to it in the scientific and political world, the deification of materialism, are all the precursors of Antichrist. It may only require a dissolution of order and a corruption of morals, greater and more universal than that which occurred in the great French Revolution, to usher in the coming of the Man of Sin, who, amid the confusion, will seize upon the sceptre of dominion. We may figure him as an individual, a man of more commanding abilities and far greater wickedness than the first Napoleon; one who will subdue the world, and in the height of his impiety and ambition proclaim his atheism, and that man himself is God. We cannot penetrate into the future, but we may rest confident that, if such a state of things should happen, the final victory of the good over the evil cannot be doubted; the breath of the Lord is sufficient to overthrow the kingdom of Antichrist, and to baffle all his pretensions. “Whom the Lord shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and annihilate by the appearance of his coming.”

¹ Alford’s ‘Greek Testament,’ vol. iii., Prolegomena, p. 67.

² Ellicott, ‘St. Paul’s Epistle to the Thessalonians,’ p. 109.

³ Commentary on the Thessalonians in the ‘Speaker’s Commentary,’ vol. iii. p. 743.

⁴ Lillie’s ‘Lectures on the Thessalonians,’ p. 537, etc.

EXPOSITION.

CHAPTER III.

CONTENTS.—The apostle now comes to the conclusion of his Epistle. He beseeches the Thessalonians for an interest in their prayers, that the gospel may be rapidly diffused and glorified by numerous conversions, and that he and his fellow-workers may be enabled to preach it unhindered by the opposition of their enemies. He expresses his confidence that the Lord will preserve them from evil and render them obedient to his instructions, it being his earnest prayer for them that they might be directed into the love of God and the patience of Jesus Christ. The apostle then proceeds to admonish them on account of the disorderly conduct which many of them exhibited. He had heard that there were some among them who walked disorderly, and who, either from dread or from excitement on account of their belief in the immediate coming of the Lord, had desisted from their worldly employments. He commands such to return to their duties, giving himself as an example, inasmuch as, when at Thessalonica, he had laboured with his own hands for support. If, however, such disorderly persons were not to be persuaded, then he enjoins the members of the Church to withdraw from them and exclude them from their society, in order that they might be ashamed and brought to repentance and amendment of life. He invokes peace upon them from the Lord of peace; he authenticates his Epistle to guard against imposition; and concludes with his apostolic benediction.

Ver. 1.—*Finally; furthermore; for the rest*; introducing the concluding part of the Epistle (see 1 Thess. iv. 1). **Brethren, pray for us** (see a similar request in 1 Thess. v. 25). Observe the unselfishness of the apostle's request. He does not ask the Thessalonians to pray specially for himself, but for the unimpeded diffusion and success of the gospel, and for himself only in so far as that he might be freed from all hindrances in preaching the gospel—that God would be pleased to crown his labours with success. **That**; introducing the subject-matter of prayer; what he requested the Thessalonians to pray for. **The word of the Lord**—namely, the gospel—may have free course; literally, *may run*; that all obstacles to its

progress may be removed; that its diffusion may be free and unimpeded; that, like the sun, it may rejoice as a strong man to run his race (Ps. xix. 5; comp. Ps. cxlvii. 15, "He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth: his word runneth very swiftly"). **And he glorified**; namely, in the conversion of souls (comp. Acts xiii. 48). The allusion may be to the applause given to the victors in the foot-races which constituted so considerable a part of the Grecian games. This personification of the Word of the Lord is a favourite figure with the apostle. "In St. Paul's language there is but a thin film between the Holy Ghost, the Divine personal Spirit, and the spirit in the believer's inmost being. And so in St. Paul's conception there is but a thin film between the Word preached and the living Word of God who is God" (Bishop Alexander). **Even as it is with you**; a recognition of the eagerness with which the Thessalonians had received the gospel.

Ver. 2.—**And that**; a further addition to the prayer. **We**; either I Paul, or else Paul and Silas and Timothy. **May be delivered**; not may "come off victorious whether by life or death" (Calvin), but may be rescued from our enemies. Jowett observes that we have here the shrinking of the flesh from the dangers which awaited the apostle. But there is no trace of cowardice in these words; the apostle desires deliverance, not for his own sake, but for the sake of the free diffusion of the gospel. **From unreasonable**; a word whose original meaning is "out of place;" then used in an ethical sense, "wicked," "absurd," "unreasonable;" perhaps here applied to persons who will not listen to arguments. **And wicked men**. By these unreasonable and wicked men are not to be understood the Jews of Thessalonica, from whom Paul formerly suffered, for their influence would hardly extend to Corinth; nor Christians who were only so in name (Calvin), and specially the Judaizing Christians, for there is no allusion as yet to their attacks upon the apostle; but the fanatical and unbelieving Jews at Corinth (see Acts xviii. 12). **For all men have not faith**; or, *the faith*; *the faith is not the possession of all*. Faith here is the Christian faith: all men have not received it—obviously alluding to the unbelieving Jews. The words cannot mean, all men have not the true faith—referring to pretended Christians—false brethren, but secret enemies (Calvin). Nor is it to be rendered "all men have not the capacity of faith." Others understand by faith that upright and candid disposition which would

engage men to receive the testimony of the apostle; and others fidelity, as if the apostle meant, "There are few men whom we can trust."

Ver. 3.—But; in contrast with the men just mentioned. The Lord is faithful; as if the apostle had said, "Man may be faithless, but the Lord is faithful" (see Rom. iii. 4). "In contrast to the infidelity of man, he praises the fidelity of God" (Bengel). By the Lord, Christ is meant. In the former Epistle, faithfulness is attributed to God (1 Thess. v. 24), here to Christ. This faithfulness of Christ consisted in watching over his Church, and in effecting its diffusion in spite of all the opposition of these unreasonable and wicked men. Who shall establish you, and keep you from evil; or, *the evil*. The word "evil" may be either masculine or neuter: if masculine, then it denotes "the evil one;" if neuter, then "evil" in general. There is nothing in the word itself to determine its meaning; this must be learned from the context. Most commentators (Calvin, Bengel, Olshausen, Hofmann, Macknight, Ellicott, Eadie, and Bishop Alexander) suppose that the evil one is meant; and it is so rendered in the R.V.: "Guard you from the evil one." But it is better to take the word abstractly—"evil" in general, whether evil persons or evil things; as a contrast to "every good word and work" (ch. ii. 17). So Alford, Lünemann, De Wette, Jowett, Lillie. There is the same difference of opinion with regard to the words in the Lord's Prayer: "Deliver us from evil;" or "from the evil one" (R.V.). Here, also, notwithstanding the high authorities on the opposite side, we consider that our Lord's words are not limited to the evil one, but are to be taken generally—"evil" in the widest sense, as being much more forcible.

Ver. 4.—And we have confidence in the Lord. The apostle confidently expects the obedience of the Thessalonians, but his confidence is not fixed on them—on their own efforts, endeavours, and resolutions—but on the Lord, namely, Christ; on his grace and strength communicated to and perfected in weakness. The obedience of the Thessalonians flowed from the grace of Christ; it was in consequence of the communication of the influences of his Spirit that they were enabled to make progress and to persevere in the Christian life. "Here," observes Professor Jowett, "as elsewhere, the apostle speaks of believing, hoping, doing all things in Christ. We lead an ordinary life as well as a religious one; but, with the apostle, his ordinary life is his religious one, and hence he uses religious expressions in reference to all that he says and does." The apostle lives in

the sphere of Christ. Touching you; with reference to you—the direction of his confidence. That ye both do and will do the things which we command you. There is here the same union of Divine assistance and human effort, of God's working and man's working, which pervades the whole scheme of the gospel salvation (see Phil. ii. 12, 13).

Ver. 5.—And the Lord; namely, Christ, for so the word "Lord" is to be rendered in St. Paul's Epistles. Bishop Wordsworth supposes that the Holy Ghost is here invoked, as both God and Christ are afterwards mentioned in the petition; but the term "Lord" is not applied by the apostle to the Holy Ghost; 2 Cor. iii. 17 is the only apparent exception. Direct your hearts; as the heart is the fountain of Christian life—the centre of the will. Into the love of God. Here not God's love to us, specially "the manifestation of the love of God in Christ and his work of redemption" (Olshausen); nor the love of God to man, which is to be the pattern of our love to God; but, objectively, our love to God. This love of God is the fulfilment of the Law; and hence the apostle prays that the Thessalonians may be directed into it as the source and essence of all acceptable obedience. And into the patient waiting for Christ. The words, "patient waiting," are but one word in the original, generally translated "patience" or "endurance." The clause has been differently interpreted. Some (Calvin, Hofmann, Jowett) render it, as in the A.V., "patient waiting for Christ." And this is conformable to the context, as the object of Paul was to repress all impatient longing for the advent. But such a meaning is not linguistically justifiable. Others render it, "patience for Christ," that is, steadfast endurance for his sake (De Wette); but there is no preposition in the original. The words simply mean, "Christ's patience," or "the patience of Christ" (R.V.), the patience which he exhibited under his unparalleled sufferings. The Thessalonians were exposed to persecutions, and therefore the apostle prays that they might be directed into the patience of Christ, as this would enable them to bear all their sufferings with composure. Love and patience comprehend the active and passive virtues of Christianity.

Now follows a warning against the disorderly life and conduct which the expectation of the immediate advent of Christ had produced. On account of the supposed nearness of the day of the Lord, great disorders had arisen in the Thessalonian Church. Work had been given up by many, who walked about in fanatical

idleness. The apostle had censured this conduct in his former Epistle (1 Thess. iv. 11, 12), but the evil had rather increased than diminished; and, accordingly, he severely rebukes this spirit, and sets himself to correct the disorders occasioned by it.

Ver. 6.—**Now we command you, brethren.** An injunction, not specially directed to the elders or office-bearers, but to the members, of the Church in general (see 1 Thess. v. 14). **In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ.** Strengthening the command, as being given in the Name and authority of the great Head of the Church; not we, but Christ himself commands you. **That ye withdraw yourselves.** A nautical expression, denoting to “shorten the sails;” hence metaphorically to keep out of the way, to withdraw; that ye avoid intercourse and fellowship with; no allusion as yet to excommunication. **From every brother—fellow-Christian—that walketh disorderly;** literally, *out of the ranks* (see 1 Thess. v. 14). **And not after the tradition;** or, *the instructions*; not the example of the apostle, which is afterwards mentioned, but the instructions which he orally delivered when at Thessalonica, and subsequently confirmed by the Epistle which he had written to them (see ch. ii. 15). **Which he received of us.** Here the readings of manuscripts differ. Some read “which you received of us,” and others “which they,” namely, those represented by the brother that walketh disorderly, “received of us” (so R.V.).

Ver. 7.—**For yourselves know;** without it being necessary for me to say anything about the matter; ye yourselves are witnesses. **How ye ought to follow (or, imitate) us;** better, perhaps, to be restricted to Paul than used as inclusive of Silas and Timothy. **For we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;** referring to the apostle’s residence in Thessalonica.

Ver. 8.—**Neither did we eat any man’s bread;** a Hebraism for “neither did we get our sustenance,” as bread was the staff of life. **For nought;** gratis, free of expense. **But wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable unto any of you.** The apostle makes the same declaration in his First Epistle, expressed in almost similar terms: “For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail; for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God” (1 Thess. ii. 9).

Ver. 9.—**Not because we have not power;** that is, to demand support. Paul, as an apostle, had the right of maintenance from the Churches among whom he laboured. This right of support he insists upon in the First

Epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. ix. 1-18). But for the sake of his converts, to give them an example of diligent working, and to remove every impediment to the progress of the gospel, he often waived his rights. Thus he did at Thessalonica (1 Thess. ii. 6, 9), at Corinth (Acts xviii. 3; 2 Cor. xi. 9), and at Ephesus (Acts xx. 34); in all these places he laboured for his maintenance as a tent-maker. **But—we acted so—to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow—imitate—us.**

Ver. 10.—**For even when we were with you;** during our residence in Thessalonica. **This we commanded, that if any man would not work, neither should he eat.** This or similar expressions have been shown to be a proverb in frequent use among the Jews. Thus: “Whoever doth not work doth not eat” (‘Bereshith Rabba’); “Let not him who would not labour before the sabbath eat on the sabbath” (‘In Lib. Zenon.’). It is a law of nature, and the apostle here sanctions it as a law of Christianity. There is here a reference to the sentence pronounced on man in Paradise in consequence of disobedience: “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread” (Gen. iii. 19). Labour, indeed, may in one point of view be considered as part of the curse, but it is also a blessing adapted to man’s fallen nature. Labour is the law of God; idleness is the parent of many crimes and is productive of misery. He who has no business allotted to him ought to choose some useful occupation for himself.

Ver. 11.—**For;** the reason for the allusion to this proverb. **We hear.** The apostle had either heard from Timothy who had rejoined him from Thessalonica, or from the report of the bearers of the First Epistle. **That there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.** There is here a paranomasia or play upon words, the words “working” and “busybodies” being cognate. It is difficult to preserve the resemblance in a translation. “Busy only with what is not their own business” (Jowett); “Working at no business, but being busybodies” (Ellicott); “Not busy, but busybodies” (Wordsworth). The word “busybodies” denotes busy in useless and superfluous things, about which one need not trouble himself—occupied about trifles. The apostle refers to the fanatical excitement in the Church on account of which the Thessalonians, instead of occupying themselves with the fulfilment of the duties of their earthly calling, busied themselves about matters which were unprofitable and vain.

Ver. 12.—**Now them that are such we command and exhort by (or, as the best manuscripts read, in) our Lord Jesus**

Christ; in him, as the source of authority; "In his Name." That with quietness. In contrast to being busybodies, with calmness of spirit, freedom from excitement. They work, and eat their own bread; not the bread of others, but their own, for which they have laboured and which they have earned. They would thus be independent of the liberality and generosity of others. (For similar exhortations, see 1 Thess. iv. 11; Eph. iv. 28.)

Ver. 13.—But ye, brethren; contrasted with those who walk disorderly, ye who have not neglected your worldly employments. Be not weary in well-doing; or, as it is in the margin, *faint not in well-doing*; "lose not heart in well-doing" (Ellicott). The phrase has been differently interpreted. Thus Chrysostom explains it that indolent persons, however justly they may be condemned, must not be suffered to perish from want—a meaning opposed to the context. Calvin renders it that, although there are many that are undeserving and abuse our liberality, we must not on this account leave off helping those who need our aid: let not the sloth of those disorderly persons hinder or damp your charity—a most needful admonition, but it does not exhaust all that is meant by the precept. Others restrict it to diligence in our earthly duties: though others be idle, working not at all, let not their example lead you astray; be not ye weary in doing what is right and proper (Lünemann). But the phrase is to be understood in its general sense, denoting holy and upright conduct (see Gal. vi. 9, where the same exhortation is given).

Ver. 14.—And if any man obey not our word by this Epistle, note that man. Some attach the words, "by this Epistle," to "note that man," and render the clause, "Note that man by an epistle to me." Thus Calvin: "He desires that they may be reported to him, that he may reprove them by his authority." So also in the margin of our A.V.: "Signify that man by an epistle." But the presence of the article denoting a definite Epistle, "this Epistle," and the order of the words in the Greek, are against this interpretation. Others render the clause, "Note that man by this Epistle;" point out to him the injunctions and the warnings which are contained in it against such a line of conduct; but such a meaning is too artificial. It is better, therefore, to attach the words, "by this Epistle," to "our word," as in the A.V.: "If any man obey not our word by this Epistle." "Note that man;" that is, set a mark upon him, note him for the sake of avoidance, excommunicate him from your society. And have no company with him. Exclude him from your fellowship meetings, your love-feasts. That he may be ashamed;

the design or object of thus noting him. As if the apostle had said, "Bring the force of Christian opinion to bear upon him. Show your moral indignation by excluding him from the Christian community." The noting or excommunicating was more of the nature of a correction than of a punishment, and its design was the reclaiming of the offender.

Ver. 15.—Yet; or as it is in the original, *and*; a purely connective particle. Count him not as an enemy; an entire outcast. But admonish him as a brother; a Christian brother. No hostile feeling was to be united with this avoidance of intercourse with the erring, but rather loving admonition, inasmuch as he was still a Christian brother.

Ver. 16.—Now the Lord of peace himself. In 1 Thess. v. 23 it is "the God of peace" who is invoked: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly." Here it is Christ who is named as "the Lord of peace." He is the Lord of peace, as the Author, the Procurer, the Mediator of peace. Peace is here to be taken in its widest sense—peace with God, complete salvation. Give you peace always by all means. Some manuscripts read "in every place," but the reading in our version is best attested—"always by all means;" "at all times and in every way;" whether it be outward or inward, for time or for eternity. The apostle could desire no higher blessing for his converts. The Lord be with you all.

Ver. 17.—The salutation of Paul with mine own hand. The apostle usually dictated his Epistles to an amanuensis, but wrote the concluding words with his own hand. Thus Tertius was his amanuensis when he wrote the Epistle to the Romans (Rom. xvi. 22). Probably the Epistle to the Galatians is an exception (Gal. vi. 11), and also the Epistle to Philemon (Philem. 19). The same authentication expressed in the same words is found in the First Epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xvi. 21), and in the Epistle to the Colossians (Col. iv. 18). Which; referring, not to the salutation, but to the whole clause; which circumstance. Is the token; the mark of authentication. Of every Epistle. Such authentication was especially necessary in the case of the Thessalonians, as it would seem that a forged epistle had been circulated among them (ch. ii. 2). Some restrict the words to the Epistles which the apostle would afterwards write to the Thessalonians (Lünemann); but they are rather to be understood of a caution which the apostle practised, or was to practise, in all his Epistles. Some refer the token to the words, "The salutation of Paul with mine own hand," and although these words are only found in two other Epistles, yet it is asserted that the

other Epistles were otherwise sufficiently authenticated. But it appears better to understand by the salutation the benediction which follows; and a similar salutation or

benediction is found at the close of all Paul's Epistles (see 1 Thess. v. 28).

Ver. 18.—The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

HOMILETICS.

Ver. 1.—*Intercessory prayer.* 1. *Its duty.* We must not be selfish or confined in our prayers, but bear each other's burdens before a throne of grace. Christian love finds its outlet in intercession. A desire for the salvation of others must manifest itself in prayer for their conversion. God is the Hearer of prayer, and will answer our prayers for others as well as for ourselves. The command of God to make intercession for all men should constrain us, and the example of holy men should encourage us. 2. *Its objects.* Sinners, that they may be saved; believers, that they may be confirmed in the faith and kept from evil; ministers, that their ministry may be blessed; the gospel, that it may have free course and be glorified.

Ver. 3.—*Perseverance of the saints.* 1. *Its nature.* By the perseverance of the saints is meant that all true believers, those who are united to Christ by faith and sanctified by his Spirit, can never fall from the faith; that they shall always abide in a state of grace or favour with God; and that they shall continue in holiness unto the end. 2. *Its ground.* The perseverance of the saints is founded on the faithfulness of Christ. "The Lord is faithful." He who has begun the good work will carry it on; he who intercedes for us in heaven will obtain his requests; he who has bestowed upon us his Spirit will not withdraw his grace. 3. *Its uses.* The perseverance of the saints is full of comfort to confirmed believers; it is that which imparts security to all their other blessings, transforms their hopes into assurance, and fills them with joy unspeakable. On the other hand, it affords no encouragement to licentiousness, for it is a perseverance in holiness; it is not that believers will be saved whatever their conduct may be, but that they will persevere in holiness unto the end.

Ver. 5.—*The patience of Christ.* 1. *Its perfection.* As seen in his conduct toward God and man during his sufferings, and in contrast to the conduct of the most patient men, as for example Job, Moses, and Paul. 2. *Its example.* We have need of patience in this world of toil and suffering. A contemplation of the patience with which Christ endured his unparalleled sufferings is the best antidote against impatience under any sufferings which we may be called upon to endure.

Ver. 6.—*Avoidance of evil company.* The apostle commands us to withdraw ourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and to have no fellowship with those who obey not his instructions. We must avoid making wicked men our companions, otherwise we shall soon be led astray and contaminated by their evil principles. The happiness or misery of the young for time and for eternity is, humanly speaking, dependent upon those whom they now choose as their intimate companions.

Ver. 10.—*The sanctity of labour.* True religion hallows earthly labour. Christianity is not designed to draw a man out of the world, to cause him to neglect his earthly duties, or to make him idle; but to consecrate and sanctify his worldly employments; to cause him to perform them in a religious spirit, and to look up to God as his chief Master. Paul himself wrought at the occupation of a tent-maker; and a far greater than Paul, the Lord Jesus Christ himself, was for the greater part of his life engaged in the occupation of a carpenter. "Earthly things," observes Dr. Arnold, "are precious when we use them as the materials with which we may build for ourselves a heavenly habitation; and the humblest and most ordinary trade or employment may be carried on with such a temper and such a spirit that it may advance us daily on our way to heaven; and the angels themselves may behold us engaged in it with respect and love."

Ver. 11.—*Evil of being busybodies.* Busybodies are idle, yet busy; idle as regards

their own work, but busy with the business of others; ever meddling with what belongs not to them; always counselling others and interfering with their concerns, whilst neglecting their own;—a character at once mean and degrading, the cause of much annoyance to themselves and of mischief to others.

Ver. 13.—*Weariness in well-doing.* 1. *The specification of some different forms of well-doing.* The advancement of men's temporal interests, the promotion of religion, the diffusion of the gospel, working with and for Christ. We must remember that we ourselves must first *be good* before we can *do good*; there must first be *well-being* before there can be *well-doing*. Good works can only proceed from good men. 2. *The causes of weariness in well-doing.* A love of ease and a wish not to put ourselves to trouble; a want of self-denial; the monotony of the work; a want of co-operation and sympathy; a want of apparent success; a want of realization of Christ's claims on our lives and services. 3. *Considerations why we should not be weary in well-doing.* Our duty as Christians; the bright example of Christ; the reward which awaits us—the rest which remains for the people of God.

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Vers. 1, 2.—*The prayers of the Thessalonians asked by the apostle.* He had prayed for them; he now asks them to pray for him.

I. MINISTERS NEED THE PRAYERS OF THEIR PEOPLE. "Finally, brethren, pray for us." 1. *Because their work is a great work.* 2. *Because it is weighted down with opposition and hindrance.* 3. *Because ministers feel their need, not only of human sympathy, but of Divine grace, wisdom, and strength.* 4. *Because such prayers knit the hearts of pastor and people more closely together.*

II. THE DOUBLE PURPORT OF THE PRAYER FOR THE APOSTLE. It was for no mere personal or selfish object, but had exclusive reference to the furtherance of the gospel. To pray for ministers is to pray for the gospel. 1. *It was a prayer for the rapid spread of the gospel.* "That the Word of the Lord may run and be glorified, even as it is also with you." (1) There were grave hindrances in its way presented by Jewish prejudice, Gentile fanaticism, and the jealousy of the Roman power. He is anxious that the gospel should not go halting and picking its steps, but "like a strong man rejoicing to run a race," overleaping all barriers of space and prejudice and hatred. Ministers have their "feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." It is God only who can remove all impediments and make the mountains a plain before Zerubbabel. (2) The apostle was anxious that the gospel should be glorified—as "the power of God unto salvation"—by the conversion of large numbers of people, by their cheerful obedience to the truth, and by their orderly walk in the gospel. He quotes the example of the Thessalonians themselves—"even as it is with you"—as worthy of imitation in spite of some exceptional defects. The courteous reference would lead his converts to pray for him with deeper interest and fervour. 2. *It was a prayer for deliverance from obstructive enemies.* "And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men." The impediments to the free progress of the gospel were evil men. They were his Jewish enemies at Corinth who rose against the apostle and brought him to the judgment-seat of Gallio (Acts xviii. 12). (1) It was a prayer that his career might not be cut short by their malignity. The apostle's life was, perhaps, the most valuable in all the world in that generation, but it seemed to be at the mercy of men without scruple or mercy. He was, indeed, "in deaths oft." His enemies either lay in wait for him to destroy him, or roused the fanaticism of mobs against him. (2) It was an enmity directed by men without any check from reason or principle. His most persevering enemies through life were the Jews. No reason or argument could satisfy them or mollify their hatred. Their conduct was easily explained by the fact that "all men have not faith." As if nothing better could be expected from godless and blaspheming Jews.—T. C.

Vers. 3, 4.—*The apostle's cheerful assurance and confidence on behalf of the Thessa-*

lonians. He dismisses all thoughts about himself, and returns to the thought of comforting his converts.

I. THE DOUBLE BLESSING IN STORE FOR THEM. "Who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil." 1. *An essential factor in their Christian comfort was establishment* (1) in the doctrines of the gospel, which were threatened by godless or fickle speculators; (2) in the grace of faith, which may be weakened by persecution or by misconceptions of truth; (3) in the profession of faith, which true believers will be able to hold fast to the end. 2. *An equally essential factor was their preservation from evil*, either (1) in the form of sin, that it should not have dominion over them or reign unto death; (2) or in the form of Satanic temptation; (3) or in the form of opposition from unreasonable and wicked men.

II. THE ARGUMENT TO ASSURE THEM OF THIS DOUBLE BLESSING. "The Lord is faithful." He will be true to his promises, and not suffer one of them to fail. The Lord Jesus is at once the Author and the Finisher of our faith. "We are complete in him;" we are "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself" (2 Tim. ii. 13). "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. iv. 13).

III. THE CONFIDENCE OF THE APOSTLE BASED ON THIS ASSURANCE. "But we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that you are both doing and will do the things which we command you." 1. *The ultimate ground of his confidence touching them was in the grace and strength of the Lord*, not in themselves, or their wisdom, or strength. 2. *The matter of his confidence*—their present and future obedience to his commands. There must be a patient continuance in well-doing; a ready, universal, perpetual obedience to the commands he had already given them by the authority of Christ, and to those which he was now about to give to them.—T. C.

Ver. 5.—*The apostle's further prayer for his converts*. They needed grace to enable them to discharge all these duties.

I. THE LORD JESUS IS THE TRUE DIRECTOR OF THE HEART. "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and the patience of Christ." 1. *The heart needs direction*. It is the fountain of life and feeling and action. But it is often wayward in its impulses. 2. *The heart that is self-led is misled*. We cannot direct our own hearts, neither can apostles do it for us; the Lord only can do it. He directs us by his Spirit, not only into all truth, but into all right feeling and all acceptable obedience. He only can change us into his own likeness.

II. THE RIGHT DIRECTION OF THE CHRISTIAN HEART. "Into the love of God, and the patience of Christ." 1. *The love of God is the spring of all evangelical obedience, and the motive-force of all spiritual power*. The Thessalonians had love already, but the apostle prays for fuller measures of it, that they may be prepared for yet more exact and thorough and unquestioning obedience. 2. *The patience of Christ*, which so characterized him, is to be copied in the lives of his followers exposed to similar persecutions. His sufferings are their sufferings; and they need his patience to enable them to endure them, as well as to sustain that "patient continuance in well-doing" in the midst of evil which will keep them free from restlessness and disorderly walking.—T. C.

Ver. 6.—*The apostle's method of dealing with the idle busybodies of the Thessalonian Church*. This is one of the leading objects of this Epistle.

I. THE NATURE OF THE OFFENCE REBUKED BY THE APOSTLE. "Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition they received from us." 1. *It was a habit of idleness, caused by the unsettling tendency of the belief that the day of the Lord's coming was near at hand to wind up all human affairs*. They were, therefore, "working not at all," allowing themselves to be ignobly dependent either upon richer brethren or upon ecclesiastical funds. 2. *Linked with this idle habit was the disposition to be "busybodies"*—concerning themselves with matters that did not belong to them. "Bishops in other men's dioceses," as the figure of the apostle elsewhere describes the same class (1 Pet. iv. 15); like the younger widows who "were wandering about from house to house, and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies" (1 Tim. v. 13). This unworthy habit of life was a serious annoyance

and interruption to neighbours, as well as an unwarranted tax upon the generosity of their rich patrons. 3. *It was an aggravation of the offence that the offenders were not only "brethren," but were living in deliberate disregard of the apostle's oral instructions during his first visit to Thessalonica.* "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither let him eat." Thus they showed a reckless defiance of apostolic counsel. This was surely to "break rank," as the word "disorder" suggests.

II. THE APOSTLE'S COMMAND TO THE CHURCH RESPECTING THESE OFFENDERS. 1. *The time was past for mere requests or exhortations.* He had addressed them in this milder tone in the First Epistle: "We beseech you that ye study to be quiet, and do your own business" (1 Thess. iv. 11). But his request had been disregarded. 2. *The command he now addresses to them was backed by Divine authority.* "We command you in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1) Because he is the Source of all authority in the Church; (2) because the conduct of the Thessalonian busybodies was a dishonour to the Lord who bought them; (3) because it was a command to which obedience could be secured so long as the Christians "directed their hearts into the love of God, and the patience of Christ." 3. *It was a command to the body of the Church to "withdraw themselves" from the disorderly brethren.* (1) It was no command to excommunicate them. It was no case of expulsion or exclusion from Church fellowship, but (2) what may be called social excommunication. The brethren were to avoid all unnecessary intercourse with them, perhaps the richer members to encourage them no longer in their indolent and restless fanaticism by their ill-placed generosity, and thus bring them to a sense of shame and repentance for their laziness and tale-bearing.—T. C.

Vers. 7—10.—*The example of the apostle himself as a support to his command.* I. THE APOSTLE'S EXAMPLE. "For we were not disorderly among you, nor did we eat bread for nought from any one, but in toil and weariness, working night and day." Though there were rich people in the Church, he accepted no gift from them, but laboured at his craft assiduously to earn a living for himself. 1. *His refusal of support from his converts did not invalidate his right to it.* "Not because we have not authority"—an authority which he fully expounds in 1 Cor. ix.—for "the labourer is worthy of his hire," and has he not "a right to forbear working"? 2. *It was based upon a supreme regard to Thessalonian interests.* (1) "That we might not be a burden to any one of you." (2) and "that we might give ourselves for a pattern unto you to imitate us." The apostle had evidently in view the extravagances of conduct that were beginning at an early period to spring from misunderstandings respecting the time of the Lord's coming. He was not ashamed of his handicraft. No Christian man ought ever to be ashamed of honest labour.

II. THE APOSTLE'S INJUNCTION TO THE DISORDERLY. "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any one will not work, neither let him eat." 1. *This does not apply to those who cannot work, but to those who will not.* The command does not touch cases of charity. 2. *It is a command based on the original law of Eden.* "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" (Gen. iii. 19). Work is a Divine order, not repealed by Christianity but lifted up to higher blessing and dignity. The idle man ought, therefore, to be allowed to suffer the effects of his idleness. 3. *It is a command which, when obeyed, will introduce tranquillity into life, and at the same time conduce to an honest self-respect.* "That working with quietness they eat their own bread." (1) They would thus be eating their own bread, not the bread earned by others' toil, nor that reserved by the same toil for the use of the really destitute and poor. (2) They would thus carry more quietness into their own lives as well as those of their neighbours, for there would be no time for intermeddling with other people's concerns. We should live "quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty" (1 Tim. ii. 2).—T. C.

Ver. 13.—*Exhortation to well-doing.* "Brethren, be not weary in well-doing."

I. THIS IMPLIES THAT THEY HAD BEEN HITHERTO ENGAGED IN WELL-DOING. "Walking honestly to them that were without" (1 Thess. iv. 12).

II. IT IS AN INJUNCTION NEEDED BY THE VERY CONDITION OF THE THESSALONIAN

CHURCH. Their charity might have been abused by the idle, but they were not to be discouraged by these examples of fanatical restlessness from the practice of beneficence.

III. IT IS AN INJUNCTION POWERFULLY RECOMMENDED ALL THROUGH THE GOSPEL. 1. *It was putting into practice the patience of Christ*, for which the apostle prayed in their interest. 2. *God is glorified by well-doing.* (John xv. 8.) 3. *God remembers it.* (Heb. vi. 9, 10.) 4. *A blessing attends it.* (Jas. i. 25.) 5. *It follows us into our final rest.* (Rev. xiv. 13.)—T. C.

Vers. 14, 15.—*The true spirit of faithful dealing with an erring brother.* The apostle returns to this subject again.

I. HIS REITERATED COMMAND. "If any man obey not our word by this Epistle, note that man, and have no company with him." Let him be a marked man, like a leper in your midst, standing wholly isolated in a heathen city. This would be a social extrusion deeply felt by a "brother" who would be cut off from the cordial greetings of the Church.

II. THE DESIGN OF THIS SOCIAL EXCOMMUNICATION. "That he may be ashamed." It is not "for destruction," but for edification; it is to bring the offender to a due sense of his sin, and to a resolution for its abandonment.

III. THE SPIRIT IN WHICH THE COMMAND IS TO BE CARRIED OUT. "Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." 1. *It is an injunction not to regard him as your enemy, or as an enemy of Christ*, as if he had denied the faith, or sunk into profligacy, or relapsed into heathenism. There must be neither hostility nor carelessness on your side, but rather "the love that suffereth long, and is kind." 2. *It is an injunction to affectionate admonition.* "But admonish him as a brother." How this would be consistent with the withdrawal of all intercourse it is unnecessary to speculate. There was to be a faithful dealing with him that he might be won back, and "Satan have no advantage" over him.—T. C.

Ver. 16.—*A prayer for peace.* "Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always in every way."

I. THE AUTHOR OF THIS BLESSING. "The Lord of peace himself"—Jesus Christ. 1. *He is our abiding Peace.* (Eph. ii. 14.) 2. *He gives it as his legacy to the Church.* (John xiv. 27.) 3. *He guides into the way of peace.* (Luke i. 79.) 4. *He is the Prince of peace.* (Isa. ix. 6.) 5. *Peace is preached by him.* (Eph. ii. 17; Acts x. 36.)

II. THE PEACE IN QUESTION INCLUDES: 1. *Reconciliation with God.* 2. *Peace with one another.* 3. *Peace in all the relations of life.* 4. *Peace in the midst of speculative disturbances.* 5. *Peace in the midst of persecutions.* 6. *Peace in the prospect of death.*

III. IT WAS A PRAYER FOR A CONTINUOUS PEACE. "Always." It was to be as uninterrupted as a river (Isa. xlvi. 18), with no breaks made in it by the world, the flesh, or the devil. None but the Lord of peace could sustain such a peace in power.

IV. IT IS PEACE TO BE ACQUIRED IN EVERY WAY—BY PRAYING, BY PREACHING, BY CONVERSATION.

V. THE PENDANT TO THIS HAPPY PRAYER. "The Lord be with you all." A comprehensive benediction upon the disorderly as well as the orderly brethren of Thessalonica. "Be with you all"—"by his presence to comfort and refresh; by his power to keep and preserve; by his grace to assist; and by his Spirit to counsel, advise, and direct."—T. C.

Vers. 17, 18.—*The closing salutation with its autographic significance.* "The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every Epistle: so I write." He takes the pen out of the hand of his amanuensis and writes the closing words himself.

I. IT WAS IMPORTANT TO AUTHENTICATE THE EPISTLE. There were letters falsely attributed to him (1 Thess. ii. 2). It is essential for Christians to know the distinction between the human and the Divine. The Thessalonians would be able to identify his large, bold handwriting (Gal. vi. 11).

II. THE SALUTATION WAS NOT A MERE SYMBOL OF FRIENDSHIP, BUT A PRAYER FOR HIS BELOVED CONVERTS. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all." 1. *His Epistles began with prayer; they end with prayer*—"fencing round that which he

said with mighty walls on either side." 2. *All the good he desires for his converts is included in the grace of the God-Man.* The prayer implies the Divinity of Christ. His name alone appears in his parting supplication. 3. *It is a parting request for all the brethren without exception,* including even those who received his rebukes.—T. C.

Vers. 1, 2.—*Prayer for missions.* I. THE IMPORTANCE OF IT. Prayer is a mighty power; we must use it. We must not stand by indifferent and uninterested, and leave the progress of the gospel to missionaries abroad, to God's ministers at home. We must all take our part in the work. Success in that work depends in large measure on the prayers of the faithful. All who pray earnestly for the work of missions are really helpers, as really, though not in the same degree, as the most hardworking missionaries. Faithful prayer is as necessary as faithful preaching. The united prayers of the Church, the mighty volume of supplication that ascends in behalf of missions, is the strength of those who labour in loneliness and self-denial among heathen and savages. Each one of us, however humble, may contribute his share to the great result. All who do so are co-workers in the blessed work of saving souls. It is a high privilege; the Lord has committed the progress of Christianity to the prayers of his people. We may well ask ourselves if we have been as energetic as we ought in that great spiritual work.

II. THE DUTY OF PRAYER. 1. *For the spread of the gospel.* St. Paul urges it constantly upon his converts. He had been praying for the Thessalonians; now he asks for their prayers in return. It is a commandment. He bids us pray that the Word of the Lord may run, that it may meet with no check in its onward course, but spread ever further and wider, from city to city, from country to country, till "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." This is the only limit. The Church must not be stationary; it must be always in movement. The water of life is living water, ever welling up fresh and clear; it is a running stream. Stagnation means corruption. The gospel must keep moving onward, winning fresh hearts, exerting an ever-growing influence over those who have long felt its power. To stand still is to go back, to win no new victories is to lose its ancient triumphs. It is our bounden duty to help on this progress by our earnest prayers. We are met by an inert mass of apathy; we must strive to kindle it into life by our fervent supplications. "Ask, and ye shall have." The apathy of which, it may be, we complain so bitterly, may be due in large measure to our own spiritual sloth, to the sluggishness of our prayers. Where the Word of the Lord runs, it will be glorified; it is living and powerful; it will manifest its energy in the blessed lives, the holy deaths, of converted men; it will show forth the glory of the Lord in that glory of holiness which, springing from his indwelling presence, will transform the souls in whom that presence abides. 2. *For the missionaries themselves.* They are exposed to many dangers; it was so with St. Paul. He was now at Corinth, a city where there was a great work to do, for the Lord had much people there. But he met with much opposition, at first from fanatical Jews, afterwards from "false brethren" and "false apostles." He bids the Thessalonians pray that he might be delivered from these men, not for his own sake—he counted not his life dear unto himself—but that he might finish his course with joy, and be blessed in saving many souls. So we should pray now for faithful missionaries, that they may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men.

LESSONS. 1. Pray constantly for the success of the gospel in all the world. Christ bids you; his apostles bid you. 2. Do not think yourself too weak and sinful to do so; such humility is false humility; it defrauds God's ministers of the assistance which you are bound to give them. 3. Believe in the power of prayer; it is an important element in a living faith.—B. C. C.

Vers. 3—5.—*St. Paul's confidence.* I. HE TRUSTS IN THE LORD. 1. *The Lord is faithful.* All men have not the faith; the faith is not the possession of all. These unreasonable and wicked men seem to be beyond its saving influences. But the Lord is faithful. He is the Truth; his promises are sure. Amid the tumult of opposition, the rude fanaticism of the Jews, the sneers of the philosophic Greeks, St. Paul still trusted in the Lord. "The Lord is faithful." It is a great word; we may well pray that it may be engraven in our hearts, as the centre of our hopes, the strength of our souls. 2. *He will strengthen the Thessalonians.* It is what St. Paul prayed for in the last

chapter. He knows that his prayer is heard. God will stablish the Thessalonians. He has built his Church upon a rock; the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The rain may descend, the flood may come, the stream of adversity may beat vehemently against the Church of God; it cannot fall, for it is founded upon the rock. God is faithful. He will keep them from the evil—from the evil which surrounds them in the world, from the power of the evil one. The words sound like a reminiscence of the Lord's prayer. Compare also 2 Tim. iv. 18, "The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom." St. Paul, it seems, was accustomed to use the same holy words which we say in our daily prayers. "How many generations of Christians that prayer has helped in their heavenward journey! They are safe now with Christ. We are marching onwards to that rest which they have reached. We have the same helps which they had. Let us seek that holy confidence which St. Paul had. The Lord is faithful; he will stablish you; he will keep you from the evil.

II. HE HAS CONFIDENCE IN THE THESSALONIANS. Or rather in the Lord touching them. It is in the Lord always that he trusts; but that confidence in the Lord reaches to the Thessalonians; he believes that they are doing now, and will continue to do the things which he commands them, because he is sure that the Lord will stablish them, and keep them from the evil. It is an exhortation delicately expressed in the language of confidence. He trusts them; the consciousness of being trusted is a strong motive for obedience; there is a sense of shame in disobeying a master, a teacher, who reposes implicit confidence in his pupils. Mark the delicate tact of the apostle.

III. HE DOUBTS THEM NOT, YET HE PRAYS FOR THEM. 1. *For growth in love.* In 1 Thess. iii. 11 he had prayed that God would direct his way to the Thessalonians; here he prays that God would direct their hearts into the way of love. The way of love is the way that leads to God, who is love. We need to be directed thither. Our attention is often distracted by the various paths which lead this way and that in the journey of life. God can direct us by his Spirit into the one path which leads to God. That path is love, self-denying, self-forgetting love—the love which comes from God and ends in God. For love is of God, it is his gift; it comes from him who is the only Fountain of pure and holy love. And it ends in him; for God only is the true Object of our highest love; only in him can the deep yearnings of our souls find their proper satisfaction. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart." It is his commandment, the first of all the commandments. He does not mock us with commands which we cannot obey; he giveth his Spirit; and the gift of the Spirit is the gift of power. He can direct; he will, if we seek it in persevering prayer, direct our hearts into the love of God. 2. *For growth in patience.* The Church of Thessalonica needed patience; it was much afflicted from the first. The Lord Jesus Christ was the great Example of patience. He endured the cross, despising the shame. If we would run with patience the race that is set before us, we must consider him, always looking unto Jesus. In our sufferings we must meditate on the sufferings of our Lord and Saviour, and pray for grace to follow his example. We need his patience, such patience as he had. We must pray for it. The Lord will direct us to it.

LESSONS. 1. The Lord is faithful; trust in him. He is true; he will establish the hearts of his chosen. 2. We must be stern with ourselves, but gentle with others; gentle words of confidence win those whom harshness would only repel. 3. Pray for love; pray for patience.—B. C. C.

Vers. 6—15.—*The importance of the common duties of daily life shown.* I. BY ST. PAUL'S EARNEST APPEALS. 1. *He commands*, and that in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. There were some among the Thessalonian Christians who walked disorderly, whose lives were not ordered according to the teaching which they had received from St. Paul. The Church generally was sound, as the Epistle shows, but there was a section that needed counsel and firm treatment. Probably the prevalent restlessness about the approach of the day of the Lord so filled their minds that it seemed hard to attend to less exciting matters. In view of an event so awful, the little details of daily occupation seemed trivial and insignificant. The whole course of life, with all its complex interests, might any moment be abruptly checked by the sudden coming of the Lord. It was hard to descend from the contemplation of a topic so absorbing to the

little duties of work and everyday life. But the apostle commands, and that with the greatest earnestness. It is just in those little duties that our responsibility chiefly lies. It is in the small matters of daily life that the battle between good and evil is fought out for each individual soul. "The daily round, the common task," is the field in which we are trained for heaven; or, if not for heaven, it must be for hell. Ordinary lives are commonplace; they do not present opportunities for showy action; there are few emergencies, little excitement in them. The lives of most of us are, by God's appointment, ordinary and commonplace; it is the discipline for eternity which he has provided for us. The quiet, faithful performance of those common duties is the best preparation for the coming of the Lord. He cannot find us better employed than in the work, whatever it may be, which his providence has given us to do. And, in truth, those commonplace lives afford ample opportunities for self-denial, if only we will use them; a road for drawing daily nearer to God, if only we will take the path pointed out by his providence, not some self-chosen way of our own. A commonplace life may be in the eyes of the holy angels full of beauty and heroism. To do each little duty, as it comes, faithfully and thoroughly; to keep the thought of God's presence constantly before us, and to try in all things, great and small alike, to please him; to persevere all the day, and every day, in the quiet life of duty;—this involves a sustained effort, a lofty faith, a holy love, which are in the sight of God of great price. The life of duty, however humble and quiet that duty may be, is the life of holiness. Religious fervour, religious excitement, if it ends in excitement and does not issue in obedience, is but a counterfeit in the sight of God; it will not abide the day of his coming. In the First Epistle St. Paul had bidden the Thessalonians to study to be quiet, to do their own business, to work with their own hands. He speaks more strongly now. Probably the excitement had increased; it had led to the disorder which he condemns. He *commands* them now, and that in virtue of his apostolic authority, in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose ambassador he was. Sometimes God's ministers must speak with authority. They must be instant in season, out of season; they must reprove, rebuke, exhort; but such rebukes will avail little, unless they are administered with much long-suffering, with humility and godly fear, and enforced by that authority of character which only holiness of life can give. To possess such authority, a man must have that reality the absence of which is so soon detected; he must have that ready sympathy which is such a source of power and success in ministerial work. 2. *They must withdraw themselves from every brother that walketh disorderly.* St. Paul is not issuing a sentence of excommunication, as in 1 Cor. v. and 1 Tim. i. 20. The conduct of these Thessalonians was not so utterly wicked as that of the incestuous person at Corinth; their errors were not so dangerous as those of Hymenæus and Alexander. But they were neglecting the duties of their station; they were living in disobedience. It was not right for Christians to recognize such men as brethren; their lives were a scandal; they were bringing discredit upon the Christian name. True Christians must be jealous for their Master's honour; they must sometimes show openly their disapprobation of inconsistency. It is a difficult and painful duty. It is necessary, in performing it, to keep a very careful watch over our own motives; to speak and act in deep humility and real charity; to cast first the beam out of our own eye; to remember the Saviour's rule, "Judge not." But though a difficult duty, it is sometimes a duty. A true Christian must not live on terms of intimacy with men who disgrace their Christian profession. He will not walk in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stand in the way of sinners. All his delight will be in the saints who are on the earth. Especially he must avoid the companionship of those who make a great show of religion and live ungodly lives. No sin is more dangerous than hypocrisy; none is more strongly condemned by our Lord.

II. BY HIS EXAMPLE. 1. *He did not behave himself disorderly.* He illustrated in his life the power of true religion. He was a man of warm affections, of enthusiastic character, full of high hopes; but he never allowed any excitement of feeling to interfere with the quiet performance of daily duties. His life and preaching supplemented one another. His preaching disclosed the motives which prompted his actions and regulated his life; his life was his preaching translated into action—it showed the reality, the living force, of the truths which he preached. 2. *He worked with his own hands.* He always asserted the right of the apostles and their companions to maintenance from the

Churches. The Lord hath ordained, he said, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. But he did not claim this right for himself. It was not pride that prompted his conduct; he accepted the gifts of the Philippians. But he knew the value of an example of self-denying and absolutely disinterested labour. The Gentile world had never seen such a life. It was a power in itself; it constrained the admiration and won the hearts of men; it forced them to admit the reality of a religion which sustained him in such unparalleled self-sacrifices. So he would not eat any man's bread for nought. For nought, he says in his humility; though he knew well that his converts in Thessalonica owed to him, like Philemon, even their own selves. He wrought with his own hands, and that night and day. It was hard, uninteresting, ill-paid labour. It required the close application of many hours to earn even the simple livelihood which contented him. But he worked on in patience, knowing the power of example.

III. HE INSISTS ON THE DUTY OF HONEST LABOUR. 1. *He had done so during his stay at Thessalonica.* He had given his opinion in the words of a short, stern proverb, "If any will not work, neither let him eat." Labour is the ordinance of God; a punishment at first (Gen. iii. 19), but it is turned into a blessing (Ps. cxxxviii. 2) to those who accept it as the will of God, and use it as a discipline of obedience and self-denial. Work, in some form or other, is a necessity for us; without work, life soon becomes dreary, full of restlessness and dissatisfaction. To have nothing to do is far from enviable; it is full of ennui and weariness. Time is a priceless talent, given us that we might work out our own salvation; to waste it day after day, to "kill time," as the saying is, is a miserable misuse of the good gifts of God. We must all work, if we would be happy here, if we would be ready to meet the Lord when he cometh. Mental labour is the lot of some, manual labour of others. God has ordered our lot and appointed our work. Work of some sort we must have. None have a right to eat their bread without labour, neither the rich nor the poor. (1) If God has given us worldly means, still we have no right to eat the bread of idleness. We must find work to do, the work which the Master has set us. If we need not work for ourselves, we must work for others. There is work enough for all in the vineyard of the Lord; only in work can we find peace and satisfaction. Without work, we are eating the bread which we have not earned; without work, we must in the end be restless and unhappy; without work, how can we bear to read those awful words, "Thou wicked and slothful servant"? (2) And the apostle forbids indiscriminate almsgiving. When the Lord said, "Give to him that asketh thee," he did not mean to the idle and the worthless. Give freely, but give to the old, the sick, the helpless. It is a difficult thing to give rightly; it needs study, thought, prayer. We must not encourage idleness, but neither must we allow our heart to be hardened by the imposture which we meet so often. Be generous, full of sympathy to the afflicted, but let the idle be corrected by the stern discipline of hunger. To give to such is doubly wrong; it encourages the slothful in their sinful idleness, and it robs the really poor. 2. *He repeats his exhortation now.* There were busybodies at Thessalonica, who neglected their own business, and busied themselves with matters which did not concern them, or with curious questions which were beyond their reach. It is always so with the idle; the restless thoughts must find occupation, and commonly find it in mischief. St. Paul exhorts them again. He does not sternly leave them to themselves; he longs for their spiritual welfare. He exhorts them, and that in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, to work with quietness; not to let excited feelings interfere with the quiet, well-ordered life of Christian duty; but to eat their own bread, the bread earned by honest labour; not to live on the alms of others, when they might preserve a manly Christian independence.

IV. HE ASKS THE BRETHREN TO SUPPORT HIS EXHORTATIONS. 1. *They must not be weary in well-doing.* There is much to make Christians weary; their own helplessness and sinfulness; the disappointments, misunderstandings, ingratitude, which they meet with in their work. But they must persevere in the quiet walk of duty; they must do good, seeking no reward save that which comes from our Father who seeth in secret. Weariness is hard to bear; it will press heavily upon us at times. We must run with patience the race that is set before us, looking always unto Jesus. 2. *They must carry out his censures.* His Epistle was an authoritative document; it came from the Lord's

apostle, armed with the Lord's authority. It must be obeyed; it was the duty of the Church to enforce obedience. The brethren must show their concurrence with St. Paul by not keeping company with any professing Christians who may still persist in disorderly conduct. But they must be careful not to sin against the law of love. The offender is a brother still; they must admonish him for his soul's sake; they must show by their conduct their sorrow, their disapproval of his disobedience, that the disapprobation of Christians known and respected may bring him to a sense of shame, and, by God's grace, to amendment of life.

LESSONS. 1. Duty seems sometimes dull and prosaic, but it is our appointed path: do each little duty as in the sight of God. 2. There is a true dignity in honest labour; never despise it in others; work yourself in the station to which God has called you. 3. Be careful in your choice of companions; avoid the disorderly; seek the society of the pious and obedient.—B. C. C.

Vers. 16—18.—*Conclusion.* I. THE CLOSING PRAYER FOR PEACE. 1. *Only the Lord can give it.* Again we have the solemn *avós*, himself. He is the Lord of peace; it is his: "My peace I give unto you." He only can grant that chiefest blessing. The Thessalonians might have their difficulties, their dangers; they might be weary. But it is the weary and the heavy laden whom the Lord calls to himself. "Come unto me," he says, "and I will give you rest." Only we must take up his yoke, the yoke of obedience; only we must bear his burden, the burden of the cross; and we shall find peace, rest for our souls. For his yoke is easy. It seems not so at first; we are tempted often to be disorderly, to forsake the quiet path of duty; it is hard to resist temptation. But if we come to Christ and learn of him, the blessed Master, he will teach us the grace and blessedness of obedience, and we shall gradually learn something of his own lesson—to do our Father's will as it is done in heaven, gladly and with cheerful submission. His burden is light. It seems not so at first; the cross is sharp. But he bore the cross once for us; he bears it *with* us now. When he strengthens us we can do all things; the heavy burden becomes light when we rest on his strength. He is the Lord of peace. Peace is his to give; he will give it to the chosen. 2. *He can give it always.* At all times and in all ways we need the peace of God. We want it in the Church, in the commonwealth, in the family; we want it all the day and every day. We shall have it if he is with us, for with his presence comes the gift of peace. "The Lord be with you." It is a precious benediction. We listen, we accept it in humble thankfulness. We must strive ourselves to keep ourselves in the love of God, to realize the deep truth of his presence, to draw daily nearer and nearer to him.

II. ST. PAUL'S OWN SALUTATION. 1. *His autograph.* He writes the concluding words with his own hand. His Epistles were sacred writings; they were the work of an inspired apostle; they had the stamp of Divine authority. St. Paul marks their importance by his closing words. He did not, perhaps he could not, write the whole; he writes his signature at the last. In his own handwriting, perhaps, as some have thought, large and clumsy (comp. Gal. vi. 11 in the Greek), but known and loved by his converts, he sends his last word of love; he salutes, he greets them with the embrace of Christian charity. 2. *His last benediction.* As always, he ends with the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. He had prayed in his first Epistle that it might rest upon them. Now he adds the significant word "all." He had been obliged to blame some of them, to blame them severely; but he will not end his Epistle with words of censure. He prays that grace may be with them *all*. He loves them all; he longs for the restoration of those who were living disorderly, for the continual progress and sanctification of the whole Church. And so he prays for grace. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ can convert the erring; that same grace can comfort and confirm the faithful. St. Paul closes all his Epistles with a prayer for grace. The grace of God should be always in our thoughts, in our hearts, in our prayers for ourselves and others.

LESSONS. 1. Only God can give true and lasting peace; seek it of him; he giveth to all men liberally. 2. We need it always, everywhere; then pray always, everywhere. 3. By grace ye are saved; refer everything to the grace of God; trust only in that grace, not in works of righteousness which we have done.—B. C. C.

Vers. 1—5.—*Intimation of the close of the Epistle.* "Finally brethren."

I. REQUEST FOR PRAYER ON BEHALF OF THE PREACHERS. 1. *For the diffusion and glorification of the Word of the Lord through their instrumentality.* *Diffusion.* "Pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may run." The Word of the Lord is the Word as given by the Lord to be diffused. It is especially the offer of salvation to perishing men on the ground of Christ's work. The Thessalonians are asked to pray that the Word of the Lord, by their preaching, may run, *i.e.* have free and rapid course. In the same way we are to pray that the Word of the Lord may be everywhere preached. This is a motto for a Bible Society: "Pray that the Word of the Lord may run." By both means may it accomplish its course. Let no country be shut to the preaching of the gospel, to the circulation of the Scriptures. Let the earth be filled with knowledge. *Glorification.* "And be glorified." For this, too, prayer needs to be made. May the Divine Spirit accompany the Word in its course through the world. And, wherever it comes, let it be glorified. Let it be shown to be the Word of the Lord, by its powerful saving effects upon the hearts of all who hear it or read it. *Commendatory statement with reference to the Thessalonians.* "As also it is with you." In its course through the world in those days, the Word came to Thessalonica. And they presented no obstacle in their hearts to its reception. They received it, not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the Word of God. And it was signally glorified in its being the means of their being turned from idols to the living and true God. Let the Word of the Lord also be glorified in our conversion, in the transformation of our characters. Let us be willing trophies of the power of the Word to change us to the Divine form. 2. *For the presence of a condition without which they could not be instrumental in diffusing and glorifying the Word of the Lord.* "And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and evil men." In most places the preachers had to encounter unreasonable and evil men. If these had their way, the Word of the Lord would be impeded, by there not being freedom for preaching it. The Thessalonians, then, are asked to pray, on behalf of the preachers, for their deliverance from these unreasonable and evil men. They are not forbidden to pray for their personal salvation, but they are enjoined to pray against them as impeters of the Word. Let Divine restraint be laid upon their unreasonableness and malice, but let Divine speed be granted to the Word. *Reason for expecting the existence of unreasonable and evil men.* "For all have not faith." The meaning is not that all have not aptitude for faith. It is one of the devil's lies that religion is only a matter for some people. The meaning is, that all are not, in the way of faith, receptive of the Word. We need not, therefore, wonder if, in the case of some, their want of sympathy with the Word shows itself in forms of unreasonableness and malice. They are only working out their position more vigorously than some others, even as Paul did in his pre-Christian state.

II. THEY HAD CONFIDENCE THAT THE LORD WOULD ASSIST THE THESSALONIANS. "But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and guard you from the evil one." They at once turn away from their own case to the case of the Thessalonians. There were unreasonable and evil men at Thessalonica too. But the Lord was to be trusted in as Protector of his Church in every place, and stronger than the unreasonable and evil men. And their Lord Protector, the preachers were persuaded, would make them immovable against the assaults of their enemies, and would deliver them from the evil one, the inspirer of their unreasonableness and malice.

III. THEIR CONFIDENCE IN THE LORD EXTENDED TO THE CO-OPERATION OF THE THESSALONIANS WITH THE LORD ASSISTING THEM. "And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command." In the language, "And we have confidence in the Lord," there is a carrying forward of the thought. Their confidence in the Lord extended to the Thessalonians doing their part. They had no doubt that in the present they were doing what they were commanded. They had no doubt also in their resolution for the future. This expression of confidence has the force of hopeful exhortation.

IV. PRAYER THAT THE LORD WOULD ASSIST THE THESSALONIANS. "And the Lord direct your hearts." Though the Lord promises to assist us, and to assist us in connection with our good resolution, yet we need to pray for his assistance. The prayer is for the directing—not mere directing, but the powerful directing—of our hearts. Of ourselves our hearts are misdirected. But, in virtue of his triumph on Calvary, the Lord has power over our hearts to direct them aright. *There is a twofold direction*

mentioned. 1. *The central disposition.* "Into the love of God." Our hearts are rightly directed, when they are directed in love toward him who is the Centre of our being. As being should tend toward its source, so should we tend toward God. As it is natural for a child to love his parents, so surely it is natural for us to love him by whom we have been made, and for whom we have been made. It was the object of the Lord, in his personal ministry on earth, to hold up before men the immeasurable goodness of God. So it is his object in our hearts, by his Spirit, to hold up Divine excellence, so that we may be powerfully attracted toward God. And in this love, as it is real and active, is there motive power for the keeping of the commandments of God handed to us by inspired men. The Lord, then, give us this love for ourselves and our friends. May God be so presented to us that all misdirection of our hearts shall be powerfully overcome. 2. *The special disposition in their situation.* "And into the patience of Christ." By the patience of Christ we are to understand the patience exhibited by Christ which is held up before us as our ideal. "For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself." In the midst, then, of unreasonable and evil men—not more unreasonable and evil than those which assailed Christ—let them in the same spirit endure.—R. F.

Vers. 6—15.—*Duty of withdrawing from a disorderly brother.* I. DUTY STATED. "Now we command you, brethren, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of us." The commandment, being in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, was as authoritative as though it had been given directly by him who has the absolute right to command in the Church. It was a commandment relating to a brother walking disorderly, and not after the received tradition. It is implied that a definite order had been appointed by the Lord for the conduct of members of the Church. This order, handed to the preachers, had been handed by them to the Thessalonians. But how was a brother to be dealt with who did not observe this order? Our Lord had laid down the rule with regard to one who offended directly against a brother. "And if thy brother sin against thee, go, show him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he hear thee not, take with thee one or two more, that at the mouth of two witnesses or three every word may be established. And if he refuse to hear them, tell it unto the Church: and if he refuse to hear the Church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican." What we have here differs from that in being the case of one who by his conduct offended against the general order and reputation of the Church to which he belonged. In 1 Cor. v. there is the ordaining of discipline in a case of very great scandal in the Corinthian Church. "For I verily, being absent in body, but present in spirit, have already, as though I were present, judged him that hath so wrought this thing, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, . . . to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." The disorderliness in the Thessalonian Church was not of the gravest nature. Nor was it disorderliness with the greatest amount of deliberation; but was rather the consequence of a false impression with regard to the coming. Nor was it the most confirmed disorderliness, being after clear enunciation of duty as shown in 1 Thess. iv. 11, 12, and, we may suppose, after warning as directed in 1 Thess. v. 14; but disorderliness to which discipline had not yet been applied. There is allowed, then, to the disorderly person the position of brother, and apparently the right to sit down at the Lord's table. But the right-minded members of the Thessalonian community are directed to withdraw from him. Let him, in the way of discipline, be shunned in private intercourse. Let him be made clearly to understand that no countenance is given to him in his disorderly course.

II. DUTY ENFORCED BY THE EXAMPLE OF THE PREACHERS. "For yourselves know how ye ought to imitate us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; neither did we eat bread for nought at any man's hand, but in labour and travail, working night and day, that we might not burden any of you." An appeal is made to what was within their own knowledge and observation. They were aware, without their requiring to be told, that there had been nothing disorderly in the behaviour of the preachers among them. They had practised what they had taught. They had been an example in all

particulars of the order of which they had been the medium of delivery. Special reference is made to their being an example of independence acquired by manual labour. It could not be said of them that they had eaten bread for nought at any man's hand. They had eaten bread in labour and travail, working night and day, to be raised above the point of being burdensome to any of them. Very similar language is used in the First Epistle. "For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: working night and day, that we might not burden any of you." The thought there is that, by their having adopted this course, they were placed above all suspicion of selfishness. They were only givers to the Thessalonians, as mothers to their infant children. We are here told what led to their supporting themselves by the labour of their own hands. It was the consideration of example. In the excitement into which the Thessalonian Church had been thrown by the announcement of the coming, there had been early observed a tendency to neglect the duties of their worldly calling, which could only result in their making themselves a burden. To counteract this tendency, they had thrown the influence of their example into the scale of industry. As they were not burdensome to the Thessalonians, let none of them be burdensome to any. *Reservation of right.* "Not because we have not the right, but to make ourselves an example unto you, that ye should imitate us." As preachers they had the right to be maintained by those to whom they ministered. In preaching they were as much labouring—giving out their strength, even the strength of their bodies—as when they were tent-making, or engaged in other manual labour. And, according to the principle which is brought in elsewhere, the labourer is worthy of his hire. In certain circumstances they felt free to accept of maintenance from those among whom they laboured, and thus to give their whole strength to spiritual work. Even at Thessalonica they felt free to accept of a gift from the Philippian Church. They did not feel free to accept of maintenance from the Thessalonian Church, simply because it was necessary, by their example, to encourage among them a spirit of independence in connection with diligence in performing the duties of their worldly calling.

III. DUTY ENFORCED BY THE PLAIN MANNER IN WHICH THE PREACHERS HAD TAUGHT. "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, If any will not work, neither let him eat." In the First Epistle it had been said, "And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your hands, even as we charged you." The Thessalonians are now referred back, beyond that point, to the time when the preachers were with them. In prescribing starvation as the remedy for the shirking of labour, Christianity has a certain aspect of severity. And yet, in this respect, Christianity is only sanctified common sense. There may be doubt in particular cases whether a man has the ability to work or the opportunity to work. But there can be no doubt of this, that if he has the ability to work and the opportunity and *will not* work, then he should be allowed to starve. That is to say, let the struggle go on in him between hunger and indolence. There is no call for our interposing in the name of Christian charity, which needs to be salted with salt, if it would not lose its flavour. We may expect that the struggle will end in hunger gaining the mastery over his indolence. And there will be an experience gained which may make him a profitable member of society for the time to come. It is well that the Christian rule is so plainly laid down. For there is a false spiritualism that looks askance at labour. It has even been attempted to throw a Christian halo around idleness in the order of the mendicant monks. But there is a sensible practical tone about Christianity which must commend it even to those who are not in sympathy with its central teaching. We do not need to engage in our worldly business with a grudge, as though all the time gained to the body were lost to the soul. We may feel free, with Paul and Silas and Timothy, in labour and travail, to work night and day, that we may not be burdensome to any. There is indeed danger, and very great danger, of our going over to the other side, and neglecting our spiritual duties, becoming worldly in our business. But that is to go beyond the intention of Christ. He means that, by attention to our spiritual duties, we should be fitted for our worldly duties. He means that we should be mindful of him, and loyal to his laws in our worldly duties. He means that, through the right performance of our worldly duties, our highest spirituality should be promoted. And blessed is he who can work out this problem aright in his life.

IV. OCCASION FOR LAYING DOWN THE DUTY. "For we hear of some that walk among

you disorderly, that work not at all, but are busybodies." There were some, the few among them, who did not observe the order given by the Lord. Specially, they did not observe the Lord's appointment of labour. They are described as working not at all. They were not idlers pure and simple, to begin with. They did not work, because they thought the coming was already commenced. They were really in a high state of tension. And, as their energies were not allowed scope at all within their proper work, they had to find scope in work beyond. This is brought out in the Greek as it cannot so well be brought out in the English translation. It is literally, and in a paradoxical way, "working nothing, but working beyond." They did not busy themselves with work that belonged to them; they even energetically busied themselves in a meddlesome way with work that did not belong to them.

V. THE DISORDERLY BRETHREN ADDRESSED. "Now them that are such we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread." The Lord's authority and suasion is brought to bear on them as a class. It was not sufficient excuse for them that they took the Lord's coming to be imminent. Even though their impression had been well founded, they were not therefore justified in freeing themselves from the Divine ordinance. If we knew when definitely we were to die, it would still be our duty, our strength being continued to us, to work up to the very last moment. That would be in the way of preparing for our change. So they should rather have thought of being called away from their ordinary work by Christ at his coming. They would thereby have saved themselves from much sinful and disquieting speculation and intrusion into what did not concern them. When we work, and work with all the might of our nature, within our own proper sphere, we can have the accompaniment of quiet. We can have restlessness banished from our mind; and we can avoid the annoyance that comes from meddling with the affairs of others. When we work, too, with a diligent hand, we are put in a position of honourable independence. We do not need to be a burden upon others. We can eat our own bread, eat what we have earned by the sweat of our brow. To orderliness, then, in the form of attention to the duties of their worldly calling, with all the weight of the Lord's authority, with all the charm of the Lord's suasion, the preachers sought to bring back the few among the Thessalonians who had been disorderly.

VI. THE CHURCH ADDRESSED AS RIGHT-MINDED. "But ye, brethren, be not weary in well-doing." From the way in which the Church is addressed, it can be seen that the right-minded from their numbers were properly representative. From the context, "well-doing" is to be understood in its less restricted sense. Those were doing well, in honouring the Lord's appointment of labour. The position in which they were placed was trying. It was hard for them to work on amid all the excitement that prevailed, especially if they themselves had the impression that the coming was impending. What need was there for work, when a new order of things was being introduced? Was it not more commendable to lay down their tools and devoutly wait for the heavens being opened over them? By this unsettling influence some of their number had been carried away. And the position of matters was aggravated by the support of these unprofitable members being thrown upon the Church. All the more honour, then, to them, the right-minded, that, amid temptation, they held to the old order, that they thought it the right thing to labour on diligently, till they actually heard their Lord's voice on earth commanding them to cease from labour. Let them not weary in following an upright course. When an upright man sees his unscrupulous neighbours taking many an advantage which in his conscience he is not free to take, he is tempted to ask what advantage there is in uprightness. But, though the disadvantages were a hundred times greater than they really are, it would still be our duty to follow the Divine leadings. Let us not weary in the path that leads to God and life. There is nothing that is in the end wearying and wearing out but a mind that is conscious of wrong-doing.

VII. FURTHER SPECIFICATION OF THE COURSE TO BE FOLLOWED WITH THE DISORDERLY BROTHER. "And if any man obeyeth not our word by this Epistle, note that man, that ye have no company with him, to the end that he may be ashamed." The right-minded being numerous could act in the name of the Church. The disorderly brother could be called before them, or before a court representative of the Lord's authority in the Church. In some way his attention was to be specially directed to the part of the

letter which pertained to him. And obedience was to be demanded of him to what was laid down in the letter. The ground was taken from under the position he occupied by the announcement that the coming was to be preceded by an apostasy and the revelation of the man of sin. That put the coming into the distance, and gave an aspect of stability to the old order of things, including the six days' labour of the fourth commandment. But it was not easy to get rid of all the false excitement at once. And the habit of idleness had to be overcome, so far as it had been formed. Against these hindrances the authority of the teachers was to be brought to bear. If after trial he persisted in neglecting to work, then the course to be followed was to note that man, and have no company with him. He was to be dealt with even as others who are mentioned in 1 Cor. v.: "But now I write unto you not to keep company if any man that is named a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one, no, not to eat." The idler among them was to be a marked man, even as the greater offender; the whole sentiment of the Church was to be brought to bear against his idleness. They were not to have free intercourse or companionship with him. They were not to admit him into their privacy. They were not to invite him to their houses, to contribute to his support, or in any way to show him countenance in his disorderly course. They were to do this with a disciplinary end in view, viz. to shame him out of his idleness. It was a shame for a man, being able-bodied, to be idle and to throw himself as a burden upon others. It was especially a shame in a Christian, who was surely not to be behind his heathen neighbour in the ordinary duties of life. By producing in him a feeling of shame his amendment would be secured. *Caution to be observed.* "And yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." They were not to take the extreme step of cutting him off altogether from Church fellowship. He was not hopelessly removed from good. There was nothing decisive against the reality of his Christianity. They were therefore, while withdrawing from him, to acknowledge him as a brother, giving him to feel that, on returning to orderliness, they would welcome him back to freedom of Christian intercourse. *There is a rule laid down here for our guidance in Christian intercourse.* We are only to have free intercourse with those who are at one with us in the great essentials of the Christian faith and life. We are not to be on easy terms with those of whose sentiments, or of whose mode of life, we cannot approve. That would be to tolerate their sentiments, to tolerate their conduct, and thus to compromise our position and open up the way for our own deterioration. It would also be to encourage them in their position and prevent their amendment. Our duty is to withdraw from them, so far as it is necessary to conserve our own position, and so far as it is necessary to convince them that we do not countenance them in their position. But we are not to go to the extreme of bearing ourselves toward them as though they did not belong to the Christian circle. We are not to treat them as enemies. But we are to perform toward them the brotherly duty of trying to remove sin from them, so as to open up the way for the restoration of all suitable Christian intercourse. It is to be feared that many Christians are not sufficiently careful as to those with whom they freely associate. They look to position, to convenience, to companionableness, to sympathy in smaller matters, and not so much as they should do to the great ends of intercourse. There are even those belonging to the Christian circle against whose ideas and conduct it is necessary for us to protest. When they are habitually worldly, or unsettling, or uncharitable, or unbrotherly in conversation, or given to intemperance, even as we love the order which Christ approves, and as we would not be partakers with them in their sins, we must withdraw from them, while not, in moral cowardice, shirking the duty of speaking out what we think and admonishing them for their good.—R. F.

Vers. 16—18.—*Concluding words.* I. SALUTATION. 1. *Invocation of peace.* (1) *From whom peace is invoked.* "Now the Lord of peace himself." We are to rise above what we can do for others to the Lord of peace himself. He has purchased peace for us by his death. "He is our Peace;" "The chastisement of our peace was upon him." He is, therefore, the sovereign Dispenser of the blessing of peace in the Churches. Peace was the legacy he left to his believing people in the world. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.

Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." When, after his resurrection, he appeared to his disciples, he hailed them with the salutation of peace: "As they thus spake," we are told, "Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you;" and yet again, on the same occasion, he said, "Peace be unto you." We wish, then, for all in whom we are interested, that our ascended Lord would bestow peace upon them, even as he bestowed peace upon the disciples before he ascended. (2) *The peace invoked.* "Give you peace." "Peace be with you," is a sentiment which we should have in our hearts, and often on our lips, especially in parting with our friends, as Paul here in his letter parts with the Thessalonians. They leave us for a time, but not without our sincere wishes for their peace. Now, what is the peace that we wish especially for those that we are interested in? *To be clear with God.* There is no greater evil than to be in a state of unreconciledness to God. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." They have sometimes a peace, a want of such dispeace as might be expected, but only by blinking the facts of their case. They do not thus get quit of their sins, any more than men can get out of debt by pertinaciously refusing to look into their accounts. Their state remains unaltered. Their sins will find them out, it may be in this life. Certainly, when earthly things cannot longer preoccupy them, and in the presence of eternal realities they are thrown back upon themselves, then will conscience fill them with dispeace. For persons who are insensible to their actual condition as sinners we can only wish dispeace. "Let sinners in Zion be afraid, let fearfulness surprise the hypocrites." What we wish for our friends is a *peace that corresponds to facts.* We wish them to be in a state of reconciliation, and to be conscious of that. We wish them to be so that they can inquire most narrowly into their state, and honestly come to the conclusion that they have an interest in Christ, while repeated self-examination can only result in the discovery of something more in their character that needs to be removed. *To have a feeling of repose in God.* We are such beings that our peace is only to be found in dependence, in leaning. We are apt to seek a resting-place in the creature; but, alas, all that is beneath the highest fails us, and we are driven from one resting-place to another, like the dove that could find no rest on the unstable waters. "Return unto thy rest, O my soul." True peace is only to be found in him from whom our being has come and to whom it tends, in leaning our weakness on his strength, our ignorance on his wisdom, our sinfulness on his grace. This is a rest out of which we cannot be driven, which makes us independent of the creature, which cures our restlessness of spirit. And as this is what we so much wish for ourselves, so we wish it for our friends. *To have a feeling of satisfaction in being employed as God wants them to be employed.* It is essential to our peace that our faculties should be truly and healthily employed. "Great peace have they who love thy Law." And what we wish for our friends is that, in some worthy way, they should work out the plan of their life given them by God. *To have peace from without.* It is said that, when a man's ways please the Lord, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him. And that is often strikingly fulfilled. But it is not what every one can enjoy. Even Christ had his enemies, who gave no cause of offence to any. And we cannot calculate on escaping, who fail so much in our social duties. But still we wish this outward peace for our friends so far as it may please God. Let them be delivered from unreasonable and evil men. "Let no root of bitterness springing up trouble them." May causes of annoyance, elements of discord, be removed from families and from Churches! (3) *Time for which peace is invoked.* "At all times." That would not be a good wish which was limited to a certain time, and was not made to extend over a longer period. If we wish peace at all, we will not wish it merely for a day, or for a month, or for a year, but for all time. Let them not by carelessness lose their evidences. Let not the coming years bring discord into their hearts or into their circle. The Lord give them peace in the season of affliction. The Lord especially give them peace in their dying hour. The Lord give them peace when they enter upon a new and solemn scene. May peace abide with them for ever. (4) *Ways in which peace is invoked.* "In all ways." The Lord of peace knows best how to see to the peace of our friends; with him, therefore, the ways may be left. The Lord use us, if we are his way of promoting their peace. The Lord work even against them in his providence, if that is necessary to their being ejected from their false confidences. The Lord especially increase their faith, that their

peace may flow as a river, broadening and deepening, until it loses itself in the ocean of eternity. 2. *Invocation of the Lord's presence.* "The Lord be with you all." This is a brief but comprehensive form of salutation. The Lord be with our friends, wherever their lot is cast. The Lord go with them where they go, and dwell with them where they dwell. The Lord be with them in their going out and in their coming in. The Lord be with them in their basket and in their store. The Lord especially be with them in the great work of their life.

II. REMARK REGARDING THE HANDWRITING OF THE SALUTATION. "The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every Epistle: so I write." Paul, here dissociating himself from Silas and Timothy as joint-writers, singles out himself by name. It is he who has given turn and form to the thought throughout. It is he who pre-eminently had the care of the Gentile Churches. At the close of 1 Corinthians, and also at the close of Colossians, there is the same language as here. "The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand." In those places there is no salutation preceding; we require, therefore, mentally to supply a salutation. Here, where there is a salutation preceding, we are supplied with what the salutation is. We are to think of the weak-eyed Paul as seated in his room in the city of Corinth, and dictating the letter to the amanuensis beside him. While he had anything on his mind to say to these Thessalonians in the way of commendation, or direction, or advice, the amanuensis continued to write. But, having fully unburdened his mind, he took the roll of parchment into his own hand, and, in his own handwriting, put down these words: "Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in all ways. The Lord be with you all." Still continuing to write, he adds the explanatory note: "The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand." In his explanation he includes his reason for giving his own handwriting: "Which is the token in every Epistle: so I write" (*i.e.* in these characters). A forged epistle in his name had been circulated in Thessalonica; to prevent such imposition in future, he gives them, in the few words in his own handwriting, a token or seal by which to assure themselves of the genuineness of his letters. Let them accept of no letter which did not carry with it the evidence of its genuineness.

III. BENEDICTION. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all." This is the short form which is found in the First Epistle, with the thoughtful addition of "all." There were some persons in the Thessalonian Church who had come under his censure. As in the sixteenth verse he has included them in his salutation ("with you all"), so now he includes them in his benediction. He leaves the Thessalonians for the time, with no grudge in his heart against any, but with the catholic desire that they should all be dealt with, not according to their own demerit, but according to the merit of their Saviour, of which he is sovereign Imputer.—R. F.

Ver. 1.—*Prayer for missions.* Money is not the sinew of the spiritual wars of the Church. The necessary appeals for money so urgently pressed by the friends of missions should not blind our eyes to the higher needs of those great enterprises. All the wealth of the Stock Exchange could not convert one soul. As it was in Israel's great battle with Amalek, when Joshua could only prevail in the field so long as Moses prayed on the mountain, the missionary is successful in proportion as the Church is prayerful. In order that this assertion may not fall powerless as an empty, dogmatic platitude, inquire how it may be substantiated by a consideration of the chief elements of true success in the mission field.

I. THE SPIRITUAL CHARACTER OF THE LABOUR OF THE MISSIONARIES. Money cannot make missionaries. It may send men abroad, feed, clothe, and house them, but it cannot put an apostolic spirit in them, nor cheer and strengthen that spirit when it flags; and yet without such a spirit no missionary work can be looked for. Careys do not come with good balance-sheets, nor are Moffatts evolved out of glowing financial reports. The great want of the missionary societies is men, not money. 1. *Prayer is necessary that the right men may be forthcoming.* God only can find the men, and the most gifted men will fail except they go in pursuit of a Divine vocation. St. Paul was appointed "not from men, nor through man" (Gal. i. 1); he was sent on his specific mission through indications of the Holy Spirit in response to the prayers of the Church at Antioch (Acts xiii. 2). 2. *Prayer is necessary that missionaries may be*

sustained. There is much to damp the ardour and depress the spirit of the missionary amid all the degraded scenes of his work. St. Paul had been praying for his friends at Thessalonica; in return he sought their prayers for his work. He so identified himself with his mission as to regard prayer for the mission as prayer for himself.

II. THE EXTERNAL PROGRESS OF THE TRUTH. St. Paul asks for prayer "that the Word of the Lord may run." Nothing is more striking than the fact that the rate of progress of Christian missions is not at all proportionate to the perfection of the mechanism with which they are organized. The years of biggest subscriptions are not always the years of most numerous conversions. 1. *Prayer is necessary that God may remove obstructions to the progress of Christianity.* Governments may hinder missions. Countries are sometimes closed against missionaries. Then we must pray that God would open a way. What doors has he opened in our day! The Word is now free to run through the vast populations of China. "The great dark continent" is opening up to the light. This is not done by money. "It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes." 2. *Prayer is necessary that God may dispose the minds of men to receive the truth.* In a neighbouring Macedonian Church lived the first European resident converted by St. Paul, and of her it is said, "whose heart the Lord opened, to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul" (Acts xvi. 14). Therefore we must pray that God's Spirit may go with the Word, to prepare the soil to receive it and to quicken it when it is sown.

III. THE INTERNAL FRUITFULNESS OF THE GOSPEL. The apostle is not satisfied with desiring that the Word of the Lord may "run;" he wishes also that it may be "glorified." This further wish strikes a high note. It reminds us that missionary success cannot be measured by the numbers of the converts. The great question is—what is the character of them? Statistical reports are delusive. The missionary who can make no sensational return of long lists of converts may be doing the most real, solid, lasting work in laying the foundation of true Christian character in a few. There are nominal Christians in heathen lands who are a dishonour to the name they bear, as there are also at home. Prayer is necessary that a right character may be cultivated in mission Churches. Christ was glorified when the man who had been a fierce demoniac sat clothed and in his right mind at the feet of his Deliverer. The Christian who has been a savage is the finest witness of the power of the gospel. But it is very difficult to irradicate the vices of heathenism, as missionaries know to their sorrow. Let us pray for this most hard but most needful work.—W. F. A.

Ver. 3.—*Security.* It is interesting to notice how much anxiety St. Paul spends on the normal and permanent character of his Christian converts. He is not satisfied with having won their first confession of faith, nor is he content that now and again they should flash out with some brilliant display of spiritual energy. His chief concern is with their life throughout, his chief desire for the strength and persistence of its higher character. It is important for all of us to bear in mind that salvation is not an isolated act, that it is a chronic condition. We are always in danger of falling unless we are kept in a continuous Divine security.

I. THE TWO ELEMENTS OF SECURITY. 1. *Internal stability.* We are in danger of falling through our own weakness. Badly built houses do not wait for an earthquake to throw them down; they crumble to pieces. (1) The first requisite for security is a *good foundation*. Christians should see to it that they are building on Christ, and not on their own doings and habits. (2) The next requisite is *compact, solid building*. The building of wood, hay, and stubble is fragile, though it may be erected on a foundation of rock. We want firm principles, sound habits, decided convictions. 2. *External protection.* (1) We are in danger from the *evil one*. In estimating our measure of security we have to take into account the character of our environment. The ship may be well built and yet it may not be able to withstand the pressure of ice-floes. The strongest house may give way before an avalanche. The Christian is beset by temptations. It is not enough that he is firm in his personal will to do right; he needs protection from external inducements to go astray. (2) To be secure against this danger we need to be *guarded*. We can never be strong enough to withstand the whole force of an attack of Satan. Some providential warding off of the fiercest blows seems to be necessary.

II. THE GREAT GROUND OF SECURITY. St. Paul does not wish, or hope, or pray for the security of his friends. He knows and is confident that they have a good ground of security. Our fears are due to our unbelief. Faith has her feet on an immovable rock. 1. The ground of our security is *Christ*. (1) He *strengthens* us with internal stability. The indwelling Christ is the source and secret of Christian vigour. Weak, wavering Christians have too little of Christ in their lives. (2) He guards us against external assaults. Christ has faced and met and defeated the tempter. He interposes the presence of his Holy Spirit between the evil spirit and our hearts. 2. The reason for trusting in Christ for security is his *faithfulness*. It should be sufficient for us to have confidence in his goodness. He is so gracious, so kind, so generous to help, that we may be sure that he will aid his people in their greatest dangers. But we have more than this assurance. He has promised help (Matt. xxviii. 20); he is appointed by God as our Saviour, and therefore, in fulfilment of his great mission, fidelity leads him to see to the security of his people.—W. F. A.

Ver. 5.—*The patience of Christ*. The Christian life has two aspects, a heavenward and an earthward aspect. In its heavenly relations it should be filled with love to God; in its earthly relations—especially when under such trials as befell the early Christians—it needs to be fortified to endure with patience. The latter grace claims particular attention.

I. GREAT PATIENCE IS REQUISITE FOR THE ENDURANCE OF EARTHLY LIFE. Very great differences in successive ages and in various individual lots make the amounts of patience necessary for each man to be very unequal. It would be foolish for one in our own day, to whom the lines have fallen in pleasant places, to pose with the solemn, martyr-like demeanour which was natural to Christians in the days of persecution. They needed patience to face cruel calamities which we happily are spared. Nevertheless, "man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward;" the quietest public times see the bitterest private sorrows in some households; great, awful spiritual troubles come upon men whose external circumstances are placid and sunny; and even where no one heavy blow falls, innumerable small vexing cares, like the Egyptian plague of flies, fret and wear the soul. Therefore patience is still greatly needed. It is one thing to suffer trouble and quite another thing to bear it, not to be crushed by it, not to rebel against the Power that sends it, even in secret thought, but to stand up under it, with dumb, uncomplaining endurance, like those sad, calm Caryatides that have stood for centuries bearing on their patient heads ponderous temple structures.

II. THE PATIENCE OF CHRIST IS THE MODEL AND THE INSPIRATION FOR THE PATIENCE OF CHRISTIANS. This wonderful patience of Christ may be best appreciated when we come to meditate on its relation to his circumstances and experience. 1. *His previous glory*. They who have once known better days feel the smart of adversity most keenly. From heaven's throne to the cross—what a descent! 2. *His extreme sufferings*. Was ever there sorrow like his? Gross insult was added to cruel torture; and insult tries patience worse than pain. 3. *His sensitive nature*. There are men who seem to feel a needle-prick more acutely than others feel a sword-thrust. Our Lord was one who felt most acutely, with the painfully delicate perception of the most refined nature. 4. *His powers of resistance*. He might have summoned legends of angels to his assistance. 5. *The marvellous spirit with which he endured all*. "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter." He not only prayed for his murderers, but he calmly weighed their guilt and defended them on account of their ignorance. This wonderful patience of our Lord is a model for us; it is also an inspiration. As we turn from the petty complaints of men to the sight of that awful, Divine patience, surely our murmurings must be shamed and silenced.

III. IT IS REQUISITE THAT GOD SHOULD DIRECT OUR HEARTS INTO THE PATIENCE OF CHRIST. 1. The patience must *penetrate to our hearts*. Patience of language and of constrained demeanour is superficial and will not satisfy God, nor can it remain long without the deeper patience of the heart. 2. Our hearts cannot receive this patience till they are *directed aright by God*. It depends on our disposition, which we must have moulded by the hand of God into a firm faith and a calm endurance. 3. This patience *follows love to God*. Our hearts are to be first directed into love. When we love as Christ loved we can endure as he endured.—W. F. A.

Ver. 10.—*Pauperizing charity.* There appear to have been idle, talkative persons in the Thessalonian Church who neglected their trades while they made themselves very prominent in the Christian assemblies, expecting to be supported out of the common funds. St. Paul justly rebukes their disgraceful conduct. He points to his own example. Even he, an apostle, devoted to the work of the Churches, did not draw from the funds of the Churches, but supported himself by his own labour. The wholesome direction which he gives has a certain grim humour about it. Here is his remedy for the tiresome, loquacious idlers: starve them into industry. That process will bring them to their senses. It would have been well if the same wise, manly counsel had always prevailed in the Church. A weak and foolish administration of Christian charity has too often fostered the poverty it aimed at curing. Some of the reasons which make it positively wrong for the charitable to support the idle should be well weighed by those persons who are more kind-hearted than reflective.

I. IT INJURES THE RECIPIENT. Thus paupers are bred and multiplied. 1. *The sin of idleness is encouraged*; for idleness is a sin. Those who encourage it will have to bear part of the guilt of it. 2. *The indolent are tempted to many vices.* The idle members of the Church gave to the Thessalonians the greatest trouble. Work is a moral antiseptic. 3. *Independence is destroyed.* The able-bodied pauper is quite unmanned by the loss of his independence. There was some sense in those stern old Elizabethan laws against sturdy beggars and vagrants.

II. IT INJURES THE GIVER. 1. Where public funds are thus misappropriated, *an injustice is done to those who contribute to them.* We do not pay poor rates in order to encourage idleness, nor do we give communion offerings for that unworthy object. District visitors who have the administration of moneys subscribed by other people should remember this, and not permit soft-heartedness to oust justice. 2. Where only private benevolence is concerned, *the heart is hardened in the end by the sight of the abuse of charity.*

III. IT INJURES THE TRULY NEEDY. We take the children's bread and give it to dogs, and the children starve. The idlers are the most clamorous for assistance, while the deserving are the most backward to make their wants known. Suffering in silence, they are often neglected, because greedy, worthless persons step in first and ravage the small heritage of the poor.

IV. IT INJURES THE COMMUNITY. 1. *It discourages industry generally.* Not only are the idle encouraged in their discreditable way of living, but a tax is put upon industry, and men do not feel so strongly inclined to work honestly for their daily bread. 2. *It propagates the worst class of society.* The idle part of the population of great cities are the canker of civilization. There vice and crime breed most freely. It is the law of England that no man need starve. But it is right and necessary that when the state gives bread it should compel labour—*i.e.*, of course, if there is health for work. Idleness is the curse of the East; Syrian felahin will sit to reap their corn. Wise Christians will ever protest against this fatal vice, and all who administer Church funds should feel a heavy responsibility resting upon them to guard against increasing it by well-meant but foolish doles of charity.—W. F. A.

Ver. 14.—*Church discipline.* There are several references to Church discipline in the writings of St. Paul, showing that he was desirous to see order and a healthy character of Church life maintained among his readers. In an earlier verse of the present chapter (ver. 6) he advises the Thessalonians to withdraw themselves "from every brother that walketh disorderly;" now he bids them not keep company with those who refuse to obey his apostolic message.

I. IDLENESS IS AN OFFENCE HEAVY ENOUGH TO MERIT CHURCH DISCIPLINE. The preceding verses show that St. Paul has in mind those idle busybodies who walked disorderly (ver. 11, etc.). We visit dishonesty, intemperance, etc., with censure. The apostle goes further, and selects idleness for special notice by the Church. So great does he feel the evil of it to be.

II. NEGLECT OF APOSTOLIC INJUNCTIONS IS THE IMMEDIATE OCCASION FOR THE EXERCISE OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE. The idle are first to be admonished (ver. 12). When admonition fails, further measures must be taken. The apostles had no ambition to be lords over Christ's heritage; though their commanding influence naturally gave great

weight to their directions, similar to that which comes unsought to the European missionary among converts from heathen savagery. Nevertheless, it was not this adventitious authority that St. Paul relied upon. He wrote under inspiration. His message was prompted by the Divine Spirit. When we refuse to hearken to the admonitions of the New Testament we are resisting the Holy Spirit of God.

III. CHURCH DISCIPLINE IS TO BE EXERCISED BY MEANS OF QUIET SEPARATION. There is no word here of physical force. It was impossible for a Christian community living in a pagan city to call in the aid of the civil power to execute its decrees; but there is every reason to believe that, had the possibility of anything of the kind been contemplated in the mind of St. Paul, he would have repudiated it—holding as he did that his weapons were not carnal. Further, there is no reference to spiritual excommunication, no cursing with bell and book. Simple separation is all that is advised. This is a peaceful, gentle, but effective mode of censure. It would, of course, directly stop the evil practice of idlers living on the Church funds. And it would administer a rebuke that would be all the more eloquent that it was silent. It is always our duty to see that our Church fellowship is kept pure. We should have the courage to separate from those who disgrace the Christian name. We should be careful for our own sakes that the society we select to move in is healthy and elevated in moral tone. For the sake of others we should discourage unworthy conduct by refusing to associate with those who are guilty of it. Some who are not brave enough to do this are guilty of great meanness in talking against offenders behind their backs, while treating them in the most friendly way when in their presence.

IV. THE OBJECT OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE IS TO RECOVER THE OFFENDER. The most stern penalties are to be inflicted with a merciful end. Here the mild punishment of quiet separation is to aim at restoring the wrong-doer. First he is to be shamed, as he will be if there be any right spirit in him. Men should feel ashamed of idleness. Then and throughout he is to be regarded, not as an enemy, but only as an erring brother. Thus tender and sympathetic should Christians be with one another in regard to their failings, remembering that it is only through the forgiving grace of Christ that any of us enjoy the privileges of Christianity. There is no room for a Pharisee in the Church, and we must beware lest the exercise of Church discipline develop his ugly spirit.—W. F. A.

Ver. 16.—*Peace from the God of peace.* After giving directions about the small trouble that disturbed the Thessalouian Christians—small indeed when compared with the bitter factiousness and the graver sin that subsequently disturbed the Church at Corinth—St. Paul prays that peace may reign among them and that the Lord may be with all of them, with the erring in their restoration as well as with the faithful brethren. The peace which he desiderates so earnestly is clearly more than mutual concord; it is that deep peace of God in the heart which is at the root of peace among men, and is itself the greatest of blessings.

I. PERFECT CHRISTIAN PEACE IS UNIVERSAL. What most strikes us in regard to the peace here referred to is the universality of its scope and area. 1. *Perfect Christian peace is continuous and unbroken.* It is to be enjoyed "at all times." In closing the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, St. Paul wished his readers to "rejoice alway" (1 Thess. v. 17). Now he prays that they may have continuous peace. If we cannot have the joy of the angels we may have the peace of God, which is better. As there are some who have happiness without peace, so there are others who have peace without happiness. There is a transient superficial calm which the world calls peace; but volcanoes slumber beneath, and in a moment it may be shattered as with an earthquake. There is no peace in the wicked. There is an eternal peace for the people of God. 2. *Perfect Christian peace comes through various means.* St. Paul adds the curious phrase, "in all ways." It is not only that peace may be enjoyed continuously in spite of changing and adverse circumstances, but those very circumstances, even the most unfriendly of them, are to minister to the peace. This may appear paradoxical, but in experience we find that the troubles and distractions which would upset all peace if we only had the surface peace of earth drive us nearer to God, and so help us to realize more perfectly the eternal peace of heaven.

II. PERFECT CHRISTIAN PEACE FLOWS FROM CHRIST. It is not to be got by any

efforts of our own wills. We cannot pacify ourselves any more than the sea can calm the raging of its own wild waves. He who said, "Peace, be still!" to the storm on the lake is the only One who can quell the tempests that surge in human hearts. Christ infuses his own peace because he is the Lord of peace. 1. *He is at peace in his own soul.* Peace is contagious. The peaceful gives peace. We may often see how much one quiet, self-possessed man can do to allay the panic of a whole crowd. "My peace I give unto you," said Jesus (John xiv. 27). 2. *He reigns in peace.* Christ does not provoke enmity and warfare except against evil. Among his own people he reigns peacefully. 3. *He directly bestows peace.* St. Paul's wish is a prayer. We pray that Christ may breathe his peace into us by a direct inspiration. This richest, deepest, purest blessing is for those who dwell near to their Lord and drink of his Spirit.

—W. F. A.



HOMILETICAL INDEX

TO

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF

ST. PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS.

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THE
PULPIT COMMENTARY,

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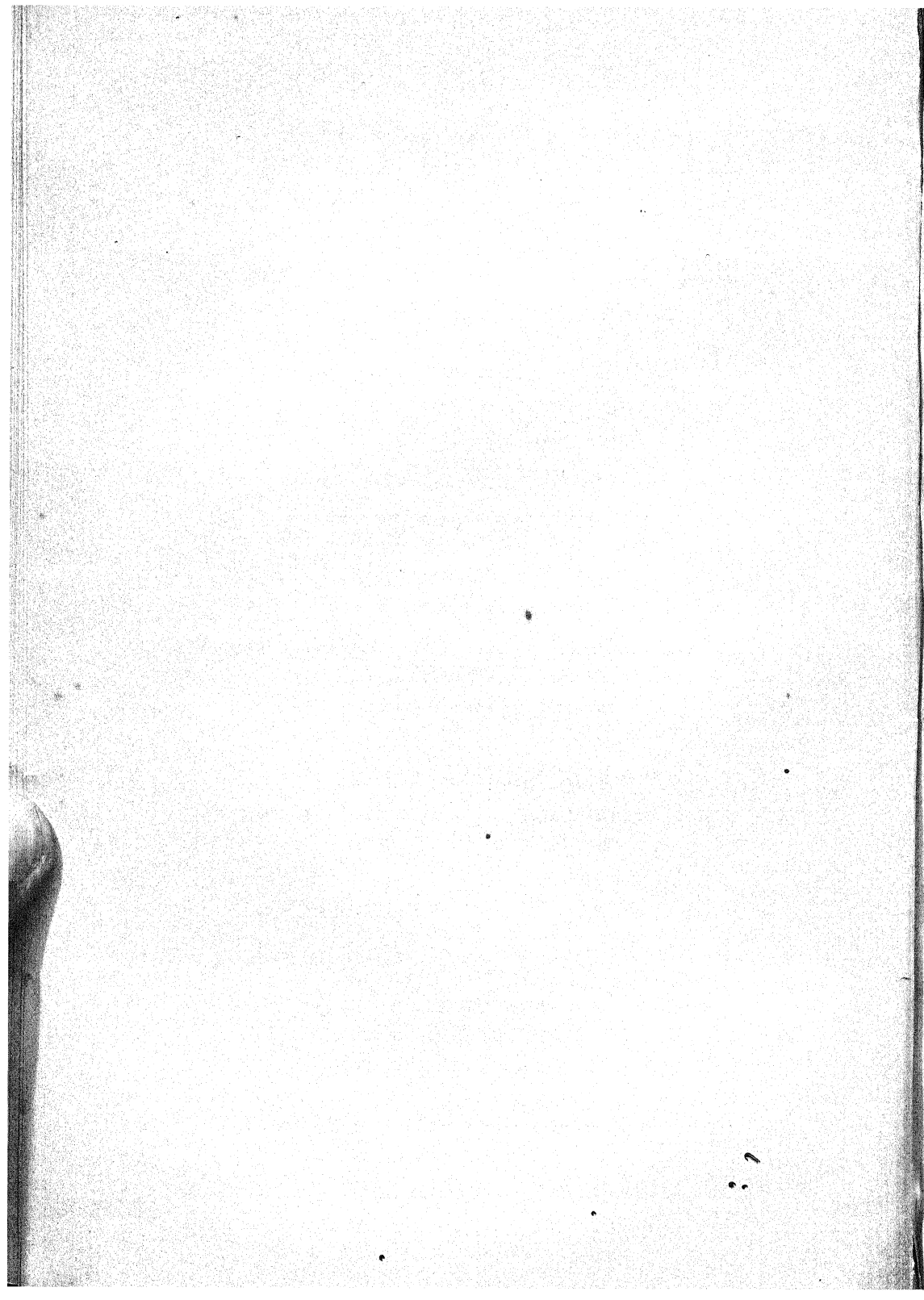
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THE PASTORAL EPISTLES.

INTRODUCTION.

THREE main inquiries present themselves to the student of the pastoral Epistles: (1) their authenticity; (2) their chronology; (3) their contents, including the matters treated of in them, and the style in which they are written. These three inquiries necessarily touch one another, and run into one another, at many points. Still, they may well be separately treated of.

§ 1. THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE PASTORAL EPISTLES.

The authenticity of these Epistles, as the genuine works of the Apostle Paul, whose name is prefixed to all three, rests upon the twofold authority of external witnesses and internal evidence.

1. The external witness is as follows. Eusebius reckons them ("the fourteen Epistles of Paul") among the universally acknowledged books of Holy Scripture, and speaks of them as manifest and certain ('Eccl. Hist.,' III. iii. and xxv.), with some reservation as to the Epistle to the Hebrews. The Muratorian Canon (about A.D. 170) includes thirteen Epistles of St. Paul, excluding the Epistle to the Hebrews; the Peschito Canon (of about the same date) reckons fourteen Epistles of St. Paul, including the Epistle to the Hebrews ("Canon," in 'Dictionary of Bible'); and they have never been doubted by any Church writers, but have held their place in all the canons of East and West. Phrases identical with those in these Epistles, and presumably quoted from them, occur in almost contemporary writers. Clemens Romanus ('1 Cor.,' ii.) has *Ἐτοιμοὶ εἰς πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθόν* (comp. Titus iii. 1). In c. xxix. he says, *Προσέλθωμεν αὐτῷ ἐν ὁσιότητι ψυχῆς, ἄγνας καὶ ἀμιάντους χεῖρας αἴροντες πρὸς αὐτόν* (comp. 1 Tim. ii. 8). Polycarp (c. iv.) uses St. Paul's very words, *Ἀρχὴ πάντων χαλεπῶν φιλαργυρία* (comp. 1 Tim. vi. 10); *Οὐδὲν εἰσηνέγκαμεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἐξενεγκεῖν τι ἔχομεν* (comp. 1 Tim. vi. 7). Theophilus of Antioch (A.D. 181) quotes 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2 verbatim as being the utterance of *Θεῖος Λόγος*, "the Word of God" ('Ad Autol.,' iii. 14). The same writer, in a passage in general harmony

with Titus iii. 3—7, uses the very words of Titus iii. 5, *Διὰ λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας* ('Ad Autol.,' i. 2). The different liturgies, as quoted in the notes on 1 Tim. ii. 1, are manifestly founded on that passage. Irenæus (A.D. 178), in his book 'Against Heresies,' repeatedly quotes by name all three Epistles (1 Tim. i. 4; 2 Tim. iv. 21; Titus iii. 10, etc.). Tertullian (A.D. 200), in 'De Præscript.,' cap. xxv., quotes again and again by name St. Paul's First and Second Epistles to Timothy. Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 194) again and again quotes both Epistles to Timothy, and says that the heretics reject them because their errors are refuted by them ('Strom.,' ii., iii., and i.). He quotes also the Epistle to Titus. Many other references and quotations may be found in Lardner (vol. i.), as well as in various 'Introductions,' as Huther, Olshausen, Alford (where they are very clearly arranged); 'Speaker's Commentary;' 'New Testament Commentary,' edited by the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol; 'Dictionary of Bible,' art. "Timothy," etc. But the above establish conclusively the acceptance of these Epistles as authentic by the unanimous consent of Church writers of the three first centuries of the Christian era—a unanimity which continued down to the present century.

2. The internal evidence is no less strong. We must remember that, if these Epistles are not St. Paul's, they are artful forgeries, written for the express purpose of deceiving. Is it possible to suppose that writings so grave, so sober, so simple and yet so powerful; breathing such a noble spirit of love and goodness, of high courage and holy resolves; replete with such great wisdom and such exalted piety; having no apparent object but the well-being of the Christian societies to which they refer; and so well calculated to promote that well-being; were written with a pen steeped in lies and falsehood? It is impossible to suppose it. The transparent truth of these Epistles is their own credential that they are the work of him whose name they bear.

But all the details of the Epistles point to the same conclusion. While there is a marked and striking difference in the vocabulary of these Epistles, which a forger would have avoided (to which we shall revert by-and-by), there is an identity of tone and sentiment, and also of words and phrases, which bespeaks them to be the birth of the same brain as the other universally acknowledged Epistles of St. Paul. Compare, for instance, the opening and the closing salutations of the three Epistles with those of St. Paul's other Epistles: they are the same. Compare the sentiment in 1 Tim. i. 5 with Rom. xiii. 10; Gal. v. 6, and the general attitude of the writer's mind towards the Jewish opponents and the Law of Moses, as seen in 1 Tim. i. 4—11; Titus i. 10—16; 2 Tim. iii. 5—8, with St. Paul's language and conduct towards the unbelievers and Judaizers among the Jews, as seen generally in the Acts of the Apostles, and in such passages in the Epistles as Rom. ii. 17—29; vii. 12; Gal. i., ii., iii., iv., v., vi.; Phil. iii.; Col. ii. 16—23; 1 Thess. ii. 14—16; and you see the very same mind. Notice, again, how the writer of the pastoral Epistles, in such passages as 1 Tim. i. 11—16; ii. 5—7; vi. 13—16; 2 Tim. i.

8—11; iv. 7, 8; Titus ii. 11—13; iii. 4—7, breaks out into rapturous exhibitions of the grace of the gospel, and refers to his own office as a preacher of it; and the similar sentiments in such passages as Rom. i. 5, 14—17; xv. 15, 16; 1 Cor. i. 17; xv. 1—11; 2 Cor. iv. 4—7; Gal. i. 1—5 (and throughout the Epistle); Eph. iii. 7—12; Col. i. 23, and in many others. Compare, again, the allusions to his own conversion, in 1 Cor. xv. 9 and Eph. iii. 8, with that in 1 Tim. i. 12, 13; the allusion to his special office as the apostle of the Gentiles, in Rom. xi. 13, with that in 1 Tim. ii. 7; and the references to his own sufferings for the gospel, *e.g.* in 2 Cor. i. 4—10; iv. 7—12; vi. 4—10; xi. 23—28; 1 Thess. ii. 2, with those in 2 Tim. i. 8, 12; ii. 9, 10; iii. 10, 11. Comp. 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35 with 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12. Then the doctrinal teaching is exactly the same; precepts of holy living, in all its details of character, temper, and conduct, flow from dogmatic statements just as they do in the other Epistles (see 1 Tim. iii. 15, 16; vi. 12—16; 2 Tim. i. 8—12; ii. 19; Titus ii. 11—14; iii. 4—8; and Eph. iv. 20—32; v. 1—4; Col. iii. 1—5, 8—17, etc.). The interposition of the doxology in 1 Tim. i. 17 is exactly in the manner of Rom. i. 25; ix. 5; xi. 36; xvi. 27; Eph. iii. 20, 21, etc. Compare, again, the two sentences of excommunication—the one mentioned in 1 Cor. v. 3—5, the other in 1 Tim. i. 20. Compare the two notices of the temptation of Eve by the serpent, in 2 Cor. xi. 3 and 1 Tim. ii. 13, 14; and the reference to Deut. xxv. 4 in 1 Cor. ix. 9 and 1 Tim. v. 18. Compare the directions to Christian slaves, in 1 Tim. vi. 1, 2, with those in Eph. vi. 5—8 and Col. iii. 22—25; the metaphor from the games, in 1 Tim. vi. 12; 2 Tim. ii. 5; iv. 7, 8, with that in 1 Cor. ix. 24—27; that of the different vessels of gold, silver, and wood and earth, in 2 Tim. ii. 20, with that of the gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, of 1 Cor. iii. 12; and compare also Rom. ix. 22, 23 and 2 Cor. iv. 7. Compare the prophetic announcement of the *apostasy*, in 2 Thess. ii. 3, with that in 1 Tim. iv. 1. We see exactly the same tone of thought in Acts xxiii. 1 as in 2 Tim. i. 3; in Rom. xiv. 14, 20, and 1 Cor. xii., and Col. ii. 16—23, as in 1 Tim. iv. 3—5 and Titus i. 14, 15; in Phil. iv. 11 as in 1 Tim. vi. 8; and in Rom. xiv. 6 as in 1 Tim. iv. 3. Many precepts are common to the pastoral and the other Epistles, as *e.g.* 1 Tim. iii. 2; Titus i. 8, and Rom. xii. 13; 1 Tim. v. 10 and Rom. xii. 13; 1 Tim. vi. 5 (A.V.) and 2 Thess. iii. 14; 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25, and 2 Cor. ii. 6, 7, and 2 Thess. iii. 15; to which it would be easy to add more examples. The directions for public worship in 1 Cor. xiv. 34 and 1 Tim. ii. 8—13 are also very similar. The repeated reference to the second coming of our Lord is another feature common to the pastoral and the other Epistles of St. Paul (see 1 Tim. vi. 14; 2 Tim. iv. 1, 8; Titus ii. 13, compared with 1 Cor. i. 7; xv. 23; 1 Thess. ii. 19; iii. 13; v. 23; 2 Thess. ii. 1, 8; Phil. iii. 20, etc.). There is a marked resemblance in thought between Titus iii. 3—7 and Eph. ii. 2—8; between Titus iii. 5 and Eph. v. 26. Note, again, St. Paul's manner of communicating information, to those to whom he wrote, concerning his affairs and surroundings, as seen in 1 Cor. xvi. 5—8, in Col. iv. 7—13, and in 2 Tim. iv. 9—17;

and the affectionate remembrance of past days, shown alike in 1 Thess. i. 2—8 and 2 Tim. i. 3—5, 16—18. Then there is the same estimate of individuals shown in the pastoral Epistles as is seen in the other Epistles. Compare the mention of Timothy, in 1 Cor. xvi. 10 and Phil. ii. 19, 20 with those in 1 Tim. i. 2; 2 Tim. i. 2—5; iv. 9, 21; that of Luke, in Col. iv. 14, with that in 2 Tim. iv. 11; that of Mark, in Col. iv. 10, with that in 2 Tim. iv. 11; and observe also the coincidence of the statements which represent Mark, in Col. iv. 10, as going to Colossæ, and in 2 Tim. iv. 11 as being in the neighbourhood of Ephesus, where Timothy might pick him up and bring him to Rome with him. It may be added, generally, that we have a certain number of the same workers associated with St. Paul in both sets of Epistles, as Timothy, Titus, Luke, Apollos, Tychicus, Trophimus (Acts xx. 4; xxi. 29), Demas, Mark, Priscilla and Aquila; and at the same time, as was to be expected after an interval of several years, the disappearance of some old names, as Sopater, Aristarchus, Gaius, Secundus, Tertius, Quartus, Onesimus, Justus, Epaphras, Epaphroditus, Sosthenes, Lucius, Jesus called Justus, etc.; and the introduction of some new ones, as Phygellus and Hermogenes, Onesiphorus, Crescens, Carpus, Eubulus, Linus, Pudens, Claudia, Artemas, Zenas, and others. The same thing may be said of places. While we have the old familiar scenes of St. Paul's apostolic labours—Miletus, Ephesus, Troas, Macedonia, Corinth—still before us, some new ones are introduced, as Crete, Nicopolis, and Dalmatia.

The other quite different class of resemblances is that of words and phrases, and literary style. St. Paul had a way of stringing together a number of words, substantives or adjectives, or short sentences. Examples of this may be seen in Rom. i. 29—31; viii. 35, 39; xvi. 14; 1 Cor. iii. 12; v. 11; vi. 9, 10; xii. 8—10, 28; 2 Cor. vi. 4—10; xi. 23—27; Gal. v. 19—23; Eph. iv. 31; Col. iii. 5, 8, 12, and elsewhere. An exactly similar mode is seen in 1 Tim. i. 9, 10; vi. 4, 5; 2 Tim. iii. 2—4, 10, 11; Titus i. 7, 8; ii. 3—8; iii. 3. St. Paul's ardent and impulsive mind led to frequent digressions and long parentheses in his writing, and occasional grammatical anomalies. Take the familiar examples of Rom. ii. 13—15; v. 13—17; Gal. ii. 6—9; Eph. iii. 2—21, etc. With these compare the long parenthesis in 1 Tim. i. 5—17; that in 1 Tim. iii. 5 and in 2 Tim. i. 3; and the grammatical difficulties of such passages as 1 Tim. iii. 16 (R.T.); iv. 16. Again, St. Paul was fond of the preposition *ἐπέρ*, of which examples are given in the note to 1 Tim. i. 14; and the *ἅπαξ λεγόμενον* in that passage, *ὑπερεπλήυνασε*, is in marked agreement with this use. The verb *φανερώνω*, in 1 Tim. iii. 16; 2 Tim. i. 10; Titus i. 3, is of very frequent use by St. Paul in Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, and Colossians. The use of *νόμος* in 1 Tim. i. 9 is the same as that in Rom. ii. 12—14; of *ἐνδυναμώω* in 1 Tim. i. 12; 2 Tim. ii. 1; iv. 17 as that in Rom. iv. 20; Eph. vi. 10; Phil. iv. 13; Heb. xi. 34; and of *καλέω* in 1 Tim. vi. 12 and 2 Tim. i. 9 as that in Rom. viii. 30; ix. 24; 1 Cor. i. 9; vii. 15, etc.; Gal. i. 6, etc.; Eph. iv. 1; Col. iii. 15; 1 Thess. ii. 12; 2 Thess. ii. 14, etc. We find *ἄφθαρτος* in Romans, Corinthians, and 2 Tim.

i. 17 (elsewhere only in 1 Peter); ἀπόθομαι in Rom. xi. 1, 2 and in 1 Tim. i. 19 (elsewhere only in the Acts); ἀνόητος in Rom. i. 14 and Gal. iii. 1, 3, and in 1 Tim. vi. 9 and Titus iii. 3 (elsewhere only in Luke xxiv. 25); ἀνυπόκριτος in Romans, Corinthians, and in 1 Tim. i. 5 and 2 Tim. i. 5 (elsewhere only in 1 Pet. i. 22 and Jas. iii. 17). Compare πνεῦμα δειλίας in 2 Tim. i. 7 with πνεῦμα δουλείας εἰς φόβον in Rom. viii. 15; χρόνων αἰώνων in 2 Tim. i. 9 and Titus i. 2 with Rom. xvi. 25 and 1 Cor. ii. 7. St. Paul applies the noun πλάσμα to the man, and the verb πλάσσω to God his Maker, in Rom. ix. 20; and the writer of 1 Tim. ii. 13 also uses πλάσσομαι of the formation of man by God. The term ἀγιασμός, which is used by St. Paul seven or eight times (and only once by St. Peter besides), is also found in 1 Tim. ii. 15. St. Paul speaks of the gospel as the “mystery of Christ,” “the hidden mystery,” etc., in Rom. xvi. 25; Eph. iii. 3, 4; Col. i. 26, and frequently elsewhere; and so we have the phrases, “the mystery of the faith,” “the mystery of godliness,” in 1 Tim. iii. 9, 16. The following thirty words are also peculiar to St. Paul and to the pastoral Epistles: ἀνέγκλητος, αὐταρκεία, ἀόρατος, ὑπεροχή, σεμνός, μεσίτης, ὑποταγή, ὑβριστής, προίστημι, ἐνδείκνυμι, πρῶτης, χρηστότης, ἀνακαίνωσις, προκόπτειν (except Luke ii. 52), προκοπή, ὀλεθρος, καταργέω (except Luke xiii. 7), ὁστράκινος, ἐκκαθαίρω, ἥπιος, ἀλαζών, ἄστοργος, ἄσπονδος (T.R.), μὀρφωσις, αἰχμαλωτεύω, σωρεύω, ἀδόκιμος, μακροθυμία (except James and 1 and 2 Peter), πάθημα (except 1 Peter), πλάσσω.

But when we pass from these resemblances in mere diction to consider the intellectual power, the *verve*, and Divine glow of the pastoral Epistles, the evidence is overwhelming. Place by their side the epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians, or the epistles of Ignatius and Polycarp, or the (so-called) ‘Epistle of Barnabas,’ and you feel the immeasurable difference between them. The combination of mental vigour and sober, practical good sense, and sagacious intuition with regard to men and things, and extensive knowledge, with fervent zeal, and enthusiasm of temperament, and ardent piety, and entire self-sacrifice, and heavenly mindedness, and the upward, onward movement of the whole inner man under the guidance of God’s Holy Spirit, producing an inartistic eloquence of immense force and persuasiveness, is found in these pastoral Epistles, as in all the other Epistles of this great apostle; but it is found nowhere else. St. Paul, we know, could have written them; we know of no one else who could. To attribute them to some unknown fraudulent impostor instead of to him, the stamp of whose personality they bear in every line as distinctly as they bear his name in their superscriptions, is a caricature of criticism, and a burlesque of unbelief.

Applying, further, the usual tests of authenticity, we may observe that all the historical and chronological marks which we can discover in these Epistles agree with the theory of their being written in the reign of the Emperor Nero. The earnestness with which the apostle directs prayers for rulers to be used in all churches—“that we may lead a quiet life” (1 Tim. ii. 1, 2; Titus iii. 1)—tallies well with the idea that the attitude of Nero

towards the Christians was beginning to excite considerable anxiety. Such thoughts as those in 1 Tim. i. 1 and vi. 15 derive fresh significance from such an idea; while the later utterance of 2 Tim. iv. 16—18 shows that what was only feared before had become a fact, and that the writer of 2 Timothy was in the midst of the Neronian persecution.

Again, the restless state of the Jewish mind, and the unhealthy crop of heresies, containing the germ of later Gnosticism, springing up amongst the semi-Christian Jews, which is reflected in the pastoral Epistles, is in accordance with all that we know of Jewish sectarianism at this time, as depicted by Philo, Josephus, and other later writers quoted by Bishop Lightfoot ('Introduction to Colossians,' p. 83, note). *Gnosticism*, as it appears in the Epistle to the Colossians and as it was taught by Cerinthus—Gnosticism, evidenced by a few Gnostic allusions, as ἀντιθέσεις τῆς ψευδονύμου γνώσεως (1 Tim. vi. 20); by a mystical instead of the real resurrection (2 Tim. ii. 18); by abstinence from meats and from marriage; by old wives' fables and ascetic practices (1 Tim. i. 8, 9);—does indeed appear in the pastoral Epistles, as was inevitable, considering their scope; but it is a Gnosticism distinctly of Jewish origin (Titus i. 10, 14), and as different from the later Gnosticism of Marcion and Valentinian and Tatian as the acorn is from the oak tree, or the infant from the grown-up man. These passages, which the great ingenuity and learning of Baur have laboured to wrest into evidences against the authenticity of these Epistles, are really very weighty evidences in their favour.

So, too, are all the marks of the then ecclesiastical polity which stand out in these Epistles. The case may be thus stated. Towards the end of the second century, when it is argued by Baur and his followers that these Epistles were forged, diocesan episcopacy was universal in the whole Church, and the word ἐπίσκοπος meant exclusively what we now mean by a *bishop* as distinguished from presbyters. And not only so, but it was the universal belief that such episcopacy had existed in regular succession from the apostles themselves, and lists of bishops were preserved in several Churches, of whom the first was said to have been appointed by an apostle. Under these circumstances, it seems to be absolutely impossible that a forger, writing in the latter part of the second century, and personating St. Paul, should represent the clergy in Crete and at Ephesus under the name of ἐπίσκοποι (1 Tim. iii.; Titus i. 7), and should not make mention of any bishop presiding over those Churches. So, again, the use of the word "presbyter" in these Epistles distinctly shows the term not yet hardened down into an exclusively technical term. The same thing is also true of the words διάκονος, διακονία, and διακονεῖν (see 1 Tim. v. 1; iv. 6; i. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 5, 11; i. 18), so that the use of these ecclesiastical terms in the pastoral Epistles is, when properly weighed, an evidence of very great weight in favour of their belonging to the first, not the second, century.

In like manner, the missionary and movable episcopates of Timothy and

Titus, and, apparently, of Tychicus and Artemas likewise, is strongly indicative of the third quarter of the first century, and was not at all likely to occur to a writer of the latter part of the second century. As far as appears from the pastoral Epistles, bishops with settled dioceses did not exist at the time when they were written. The apostles exercised full episcopal powers themselves; and appear to have had in their train a certain number of *missionary* bishops, whom they sent for a time to take the oversight of particular Churches, as they were needed, and then passed on to superintend other Churches. Bishops with a *fixed diocese* arose from these, but did not become the rule till the apostles who appointed them had passed away.

A further indication of the time when these Epistles were written may also be found in their style, which does belong to the latter part of the first century, and does not belong to the latter part of the second. Frequent resemblances in style and matter to the Epistle to the Hebrews, to the First Epistle of Peter, to the Epistle of James, as well as to the diction of Philo, Josephus, the later Books of the Maccabees, Plutarch, and to the sentiments of Seneca, indicate a writer of the Neronian age, and not one at the time of the Antonines.

But, as hinted above, there are features in the literary style of the pastoral Epistles which are very peculiar, and which, if taken alone, would be suggestive of a different authorship from that of St. Paul's other Epistles. In the Appendix to this Introduction will be found a list of a hundred and eighty-seven words, of which one hundred and sixty-five are found *only* in the pastoral Epistles,¹ eleven *only* in the pastoral Epistles and the Epistle to the Hebrews, and eleven *only* in the pastoral Epistles, Hebrews, St. James, St. Peter, St. Luke, and the Acts of the Apostles. Of these, about forty-four are found in the LXX., but in some instances very rarely, so that the LXX. cannot be the quarry from which St. Paul dug these new additions to his vocabulary. But they are almost all good classical words; and it is further remarkable, with regard to other words which are found in other parts of Holy Scripture, that in the pastoral Epistles they follow the classical rather than the Hellenistic usage.

The natural inferences from the above facts are (1) that these pastoral Epistles were written later than the other Epistles; (2) that in the interval the writer had enlarged his acquaintance with Greek classics; (3) that, as his two correspondents were Greeks, he wrote to them in the purest Greek he could command.

It is remarkable that the theory which assigns the pastoral Epistles to the time after St. Paul's return from Spain fully agrees with the first two of the above inferences. It places an interval of two or three years between the latest of St. Paul's other Epistles and these Epistles to Timothy and Titus, and it also indicates a space of two years (Acts xxviii. 31), during which he may well have had leisure to increase largely his acquaintance

¹ One of these (*εὐχρηστος*) is found also once in the Epistle to Philemon.

with Greek classical literature. If among those that "came in unto him" at his own hired house (Acts xxviii. 30) were any men like Seneca, or the elder Pliny, or Sergius Paulus, St. Paul may well have thought it useful to read Greek classical writers—Aristotle, Polybius, Plutarch, Demosthenes, and others—with the view of increasing his influence with men of culture and learning in the great capital of the world. And the fruit of such studies would be seen in the enlarged vocabulary of the pastoral Epistles. It is curious that this conjecture is somewhat strengthened by the circumstance that St. Paul appears to have made his residence in Crete the occasion of reading the poems of the great Cretan prophet and poet Epimenides (Titus i. 12). It may also be added that the effect of fresh reading upon a person's style would be much greater in the case of an *acquired* language, as Greek probably was to St. Paul, than in the case of a person's mother-tongue. The variation in the vocabulary of the pastoral Epistles may, of course, also partly be accounted for by the difference in the matters treated of in them; and by the books of the heretics, which St. Paul may have read with a view to refuting them. Such phrases as the *ἀντιθέσεις τῆς ψευδογνώσεως* (1 Tim. vi. 20), and the allusion to the *βεβήλοι κενοφρονίαι* of the heretics, indicate some acquaintance with their writings.

The conclusion, then, with regard to the internal marks of style, diction, sentiment, doctrine, incidental allusions to men, and things, and places, and institutions, is that they are in full accordance with the external testimony which assigns these Epistles undoubtingly to the apostle whose name they bear; and that the pastoral Epistles are the authentic works of St. Paul.

§ 2. THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE PASTORAL EPISTLES.

Our next task is to ascertain the chronology of these Epistles; their chronology (1) relatively to each other; (2) to the incidents in St. Paul's life; (3) the absolute time of their composition.]

1. To begin with their chronology relatively to each other. Drawing our conclusions solely from the Epistles themselves, the order which naturally presents itself is the following: (1) the Epistle to Titus; (2) the First Epistle to Timothy; (3) the Second Epistle to Timothy. And this order is founded upon the following reasons. All the internal marks of the Epistles indicate, according to the almost unanimous opinion of commentators, that they were written at no long interval from one another. This is indicated, as regards Titus and 1 Timothy, by the close resemblance of matter and words, analogous to the resemblances of the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians; and, as regards 2 Timothy and the two other Epistles, partly by the same kind of resemblances (though less frequent), by the evidences of the same enemies and the same difficulties having to be encountered by Timothy at the time of the writing of the Second Epistle that existed at the time of writing the first; and further, by the route indicated in 2 Timothy as taken by St. Paul shortly before that Epistle was written, agreeing exactly with that which may be inferred from the Epistle to Titus

and the First Epistle to Timothy. Assuming that the three Epistles were written in the same year, and that "the winter" spoken of in Titus iii. 12 and 2 Tim. iv. 20 is the same winter, we get the following itinerary for St. Paul: Crete (Titus i. 3), Miletus (2 Tim. iii. 20), possibly Ephesus (1 Tim. i. 3), Troas (2 Tim. iii. 13), Macedonia (1 Tim. i. 3), Corinth (2 Tim. iii. 20), Nicopolis (Titus iii. 12), Rome (2 Tim. i. 17; iv. 15—17). As, then, it is clear that when St. Paul left Crete he intended to go to Nicopolis, and as the places above enumerated lie exactly on the route which he probably would have taken, we conclude that the journey which we thus gather from 1 and 2 Timothy is that of which Titus furnishes us with the *terminus a quo* and the *terminus ad quem*. Again, as the leaving Titus in Crete is the first incident disclosed in this journey from south to north, it is natural to suppose that this Epistle was written first, probably immediately after St. Paul left Crete, as the instructions in it would be needed immediately. Timothy would not be sent to Ephesus till a little later, probably from Miletus, and 1 Timothy would not be written till after he had been a short time there (1 Tim. i. 3)—written, perhaps, from Troas, with the intention of soon joining Timothy at Ephesus (1 Tim. iii. 14; iv. 13). St. Paul's intention probably was to go no further than Macedonia in the first instance (1 Tim. i. 3), and return from thence to Ephesus before going on to Nicopolis. But circumstances of which we know nothing led him on to Corinth, and he abandoned his intention of returning to Ephesus. Did he send for Timothy to Macedonia when he found he could not go to Ephesus, and there part from him with many tears (2 Tim. i. 4)? This would well agree with the mention of the subsequent events relating to Demas, Crescens, Titus, Tychicus, and Erastus. But then there is the clause (2 Tim. iv. 20), "But Trophimus I left at Miletus sick." But that may have been added, as it were, out of its proper place, to account for the absence of the only other member of the missionary band not yet noticed. Demas, Crescens, Titus, Luke, Mark, Tychicus, Erastus, were all accounted for, and so he adds, "Trophimus can't be with me, because I left him at Miletus sick, when I was on my way to Macedonia."

The above theory also will explain the clause in 2 Tim. iv. 12 which has a good deal puzzled commentators. St. Paul, of course, would not bring Timothy away from Ephesus for any length of time without sending some one to take his place. We learn from Titus iii. 12 that Tychicus was one of those whom St. Paul contemplated sending to Crete to take Titus's place when he came to Nicopolis. He probably did send Artemas. Tychicus was therefore free; and so St. Paul, having summoned Timothy to Rome, tells him that Tychicus will take his place at Ephesus during his absence.

But to follow St. Paul. From Corinth he appears to have gone to Nicopolis, because the mention of Titus as gone to Dalmatia seems to imply that he had met St. Paul at Nicopolis according to appointment, and from thence had been sent by him to the neighbouring province of Dalmatia

when Crescens also went to Galatia. At Nicopolis, apparently, the first signs of danger began to show themselves; and Demas made some excuse for going to his native city of Thessalonica, leaving St. Paul to confront the danger without his aid. Whether he was arrested while at Nicopolis, which was in the province of Achaia, and taken to Rome as a prisoner, which seems most probable, or whether he voluntarily, for reasons we know not of, sailed from Apollonia to Brundisium, and thence proceeded to Rome, and was seized and imprisoned there, we have no certain means of deciding. All that the existing documents enable us to conclude with anything like certainty is that he did go on to Rome, and was a prisoner there when he wrote the Second Epistle to Timothy.

The reasons for concluding that 2 Timothy was written from Rome are (1) the tradition that it was at Rome that he was tried and condemned to death and suffered martyrdom. This tradition, though surprisingly vague, is constant and unanimous. The earliest witness, that of Clement of Rome, who could have told us all about it, is most provokingly indefinite. He tells us that Paul, after many sufferings, "having come to the boundary of the West, and having testified (*μαρτυρήσας*) before the rulers (*τῶν ἡγουμένων*), so departed from this world" ('1 Epist. to the Corinth.,' c. 5). Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth (about A.D. 170), says that Peter and Paul both taught in Italy, and suffered martyrdom there at the same time ('Ap. Euseb.,' ii. 25). Caius the presbyter says that the "trophies of those who founded the Church of Rome (*i.e.* Peter and Paul) may be seen both at the Vatican and on the Via Ostia"—meaning the churches or monuments dedicated to them (*ibid.*). Eusebius also quotes Tertullian as saying expressly that Nero was the first emperor who persecuted the Christians; that he was led on to the slaughter of the apostles, and that Paul's head was cut off at Rome itself, and Peter in like manner was crucified, in Nero's reign. Eusebius adds that this narrative is confirmed by the inscription (*πρόσρησις*) still extant on their respective tombs at Rome. Eusebius also states in the following book (iii. 1, 2) that St. Paul, having preached the Gospel from Jerusalem to Illyricum, at last suffered martyrdom at Rome under Nero, and quotes Origen as his authority. He adds that St. Paul wrote the Epistle to Timothy, in which he mentions Linus, from Rome.

(2) The internal evidence of that Epistle also points to Rome as the place where it was written. If ch. i. 17 relates to a recent visit of Onesiphorus, that would, of course, be in itself decisive evidence. But, omitting that as doubtful, we may take ch. iv. 17 as at least probably indicating Rome as the place where he was at the time. The seat of judgment, the presence of the emperor, the concourse of the Gentiles, the names of the persons sending salutations, including Linus, the first Bishop of Rome, and the expressions of the near approach of his death in ch. iv. 7, 8, leave little doubt that he was now at Rome; and, if so, 2 Timothy must have been the last of the three pastoral Epistles.

2. But at what period of St. Paul's life were these Epistles written? The

question has already been partially answered in the preceding section, but it is important enough to demand a separate consideration.

Hug, in his 'Introduction to the Writings of the New Testament' (vol. ii. sects. xc., ciii., cxxii., cxxiii.), assigns the Epistle to Titus to St. Paul's second missionary journey. He supposes that, when he left Corinth (Acts xviii. 18) to go to Ephesus, he, either voluntarily or by stress of weather, went round by Crete, and that he left Titus there; that he then pursued his journey to Ephesus, wrote the Epistle to Titus, recommended Apollos to him, who he knew was going on from Corinth (Acts xxiii. 27); then proceeded to Cæsarea, Jerusalem, and Antioch; and from thence, passing through Galatia and Phrygia, so returned to Ephesus (Acts xviii. 22, 23; xix. 1), having wintered by the way at Nicopolis in Cilicia, a city lying between Antioch and Tarsus, near to Issus. But the objections to this scheme are insuperable. The narrative of his passage from Cenchrea to Ephesus with Aquila and Priscilla is quite incompatible with a sojourn at Crete by the way. So important an incident could not have been omitted. There is every appearance, moreover, of haste in the apostle's movements from Corinth, in order to enable him to reach Jerusalem by the feast (probably of Pentecost) in connection with the fulfilment of his vow (Acts xviii. 18, 21), which makes the notion of a sojourn in Crete as unseasonable as possible. Then Nicopolis in Cilicia is the most unlikely place imaginable for him to winter in. It was an obscure city, not connected with any missionary work of St. Paul's that we know of, and it is obvious to suppose that he would rather have wintered at Antioch, or, if so near his own home, at Tarsus. Nor is it possible to account for the omission of the mention of Nicopolis in the account given by St. Luke, in Acts xviii. 22, 23, of how Paul spent his time, if he passed some three months of the winter there. By Hug's own admission there is no other time in the compass of St. Luke's narrative when St. Paul could possibly have gone to Crete.

He assigns 1 Timothy to St. Paul's third missionary journey—to the time, viz., when St. Paul left Ephesus, after the tumult, to go to Macedonia (Acts xx. 1). But it is surely absolutely fatal to this theory that we read, in Acts xix. 22, just before the tumult, that he "sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus (to precede him); but he himself stayed in Asia for a season." Nor is it less in flat contradiction to St. Paul's declared purpose (Acts xix. 21; xx. 3) of going from Macedonia and Achaia to Jerusalem; that he tells Timothy, in 1 Tim. iii. 14, 15, that it is his intention to return very shortly to Ephesus. We know, in fact, that, though he was obliged by the violence of the Jews (Acts xx. 3) to return by way of Macedonia, yet he would not even so much as go to Ephesus for a day, but sent for the elders to meet him at Miletus (Acts xx. 16, 17). We know also that Timothy, whom he had sent before him to Macedonia, returned with him from Macedonia into Asia (Acts xx. 4), and was with him when he wrote 2 Cor. i. 1. So that

every detail is directly opposed to the idea that the journey into Macedonia of 1 Tim. i: 3 is the same as the journey of Acts xix. 21 and xx. 1, and, consequently, that 1 Timothy was written at this time.

Hug assigns 2 Timothy to the time of St. Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, and places it after the Epistle to the Ephesians and before those to the Colossians and Philemon. There are, no doubt, some coincidences which, taken alone, encourage such a conclusion. For example, Timothy was not with St. Paul when he wrote to the Ephesians (i. 1), but in that same Epistle (vi. 21) he tells the Ephesians that he has sent Tychicus to them, and we find that Timothy was with St. Paul when he wrote Col. i. 1. But in 2 Timothy we find St. Paul writing to Timothy and bidding him come to him quickly, and telling him that he had sent Tychicus to Ephesus. Again, in Col. iv. 10—14 we find the following persons with St. Paul: Mark, Luke, Demas, besides Timothy (i. 2), and Tychicus, who had just left him. But in 2 Tim. iv. we find Luke with him, Demas had just forsaken him, Tychicus had just been sent away by him, and Timothy and Mark were immediately expected. But the force of these coincidences is very much weakened by the following considerations. St. Paul's staff of missionary companions and associates consisted of about twenty-two persons, of whom mention is made either during his imprisonment at Rome or shortly before. They are the following: *Apollos*, *Aquila*, Aristarchus, *Demas*, Epaphras or Epaphroditus, *Erastus*, Gaius, Justus, Lucius, *Luke*, *Mark*, Onesimus, *Priscilla*, Secundus, Silas, Sopater, Sosthenes, Sylvanus, *Timothy*, *Titus*, *Trophimus*, *Tychicus*. Of these, eleven (those in italics) appear in the pastoral Epistles as still at work with St. Paul. The other eleven are not mentioned in the pastoral Epistles. But nine new names appear: Artemas, Carpus, Claudia, Crescens, Eubulus, Linus, Onesiphorus, Pudens, and Zenas. This is very much the proportion of change in the *personnel* which three or four years might be expected to produce.

Again, if we look closely into the supposed coincidences in the situation exposed by Col. iv. and 2 Tim. iv., some of them are transformed into contradictions. Thus 2 Tim. iv. 10, 11 represents Demas as having forsaken St. Paul and gone to Thessalonica, whereas Col. iv. 14 (written, according to Hug, after 2 Timothy) represents him as still with St. Paul. Again, 2 Tim. iv. 11 represents Mark as probably coming from the neighbourhood of Ephesus to St. Paul at Rome to minister to him; but Col. iv. 10 represents him as likely soon to go from Rome to Colossae, and apparently as a stranger. Once more, the notice of Erastus and of Trophimus, in 2 Tim. iv. 20, naturally implies that Erastus had been in Corinth with Paul, but remained there when Paul came away, and, in like manner, that he and Trophimus had both been at Miletus together, which, of course, is fatal to Hug's theory. His expedient of translating ἀπέλιπον, "they left" is very unnatural and forced, and his rendering of ἐμεινεν does not suit the aorist, which rather gives the sense "When I came away, he stopped at Corinth."

Other circumstances militate strongly against the composition of 2 Timothy at the time of St. Paul's first imprisonment. St. Luke's account of that imprisonment by no means prepares the reader for a tragic termination of it (Acts xxviii. 30, 31). Nor does St. Paul's own language, in the Epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon, indicate any expectation on his part that he would be condemned to death; rather, on the contrary, he expresses the hope of a speedy deliverance (Eph. vi. 21, 22; Phil. ii. 24; Col. iv. 8; Philem. 22). But in 2 Timothy his strain is wholly different. He writes with the feeling that his work is done, and his departure is near at hand (2 Tim. iv. 6—8, 18); not a word of being delivered in answer to their prayers, nor of expectation of being set free. The difference is marked, and surely most significant.

The necessary conclusion is that Hug's scheme is quite impracticable. Various other hypotheses, assigning the date of the pastoral Epistles to some part of St. Paul's life unwritten by St. Luke in the Acts, of which the principal are enumerated and explained by Huther in his 'Introduction,' are equally incompatible with one or more plain statements in the Acts of the Apostles or in the Epistles themselves, and must therefore alike be abandoned.

Moreover, they all fail to account for those peculiarities in the diction of the pastoral Epistles which are pointed out in the first part of this Introduction. If the difficulties in finding any place in the narrative of the Acts of the Apostles in which to fit in the pastoral Epistles with their allusions could be got over (which they cannot), we should be landed in the no less formidable difficulty of having to account for great changes of language as compared with St. Paul's other Epistles, and a difference in the aspect of the institutions of the Church and of the rising heresies, as reflected in these Epistles, from what we see either in the Acts or in St. Paul's other Epistles.

We are driven, therefore, to accept the hypothesis which assigns these Epistles to a time posterior to that embraced in the narrative of St. Luke. And we will now state the case for this hypothesis from its positive side.

The Acts of the Apostles close with the statement that St. Paul "abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching all things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, with all boldness, none forbidding him." It is quite as natural a sequel to this statement that, at the end of the two years, the apostle resumed his active career as "the Apostle of the Gentiles," as that he was led out to execution as a criminal: most people will think it is a more natural one. However, in the absence of any further information from Holy Scripture, we must have recourse to such other sources of information as are open to us. Eusebius, who was the great collector of history from works now lost, and of traditions current in the Church, after citing the closing words of the Acts of the Apostles, tells us ('Ecol. Hist.,' ii. xxii.) that the current account was that the apostle, having then made his defence,

afterwards started again on his work of preaching; but that, having come to Rome a second time, he was made perfect by martyrdom. At which time, being in prison, he wrote the Second Epistle to Timothy. Eusebius adds, after commenting somewhat confusedly upon the last chapter of 2 Timothy, that he wrote thus much to show that St. Paul did not accomplish his martyrdom during that sojourn at Rome which is narrated by St. Luke. He adds that Nero was comparatively mild and clement at the time of Paul's first visit, and so received his defence favourably; but that later, having fallen into monstrous crimes, he attacked the apostles along with others. From this it is evident that Eusebius, with such means of information as he could command, believed the account which was current in his time to be true.

Clement of Rome, again, in his 'Epistle to the Corinthians,' in the passage, quoted above (p. x.), uses language which, in the light of the above traditions, certainly points strongly to the visit to Spain: τὸ τέρμα τῆς δύσεως, "the utmost bound of the West," could not mean "Italy" in the mouth of a person living at Rome, but is a natural description of Spain. Following the order used by Clement, this visit to Spain immediately preceded his testimony before the rulers of the world, and his departure from this life: Ἐπὶ τὸ τέρμα τῆς δύσεως ἐλθὼν, καὶ μαρτυρήσας ἐπὶ τῶν ἡγουμένων, οὕτως ἀπηλλάγη τοῦ κόσμου.

The Muratorian Fragment on the Canon adds another early testimony to the belief of the Church that St. Paul went to Spain after his captivity in Rome. For, though the passage is so corrupt and mutilated as to defy translation, yet the words, "profectionem Pauli ab urbe ad Spaniam proficiscentis," tell us certainly, as Routh observes ('Reliq. Sac.,' vol. iv. p. 20), that St. Paul, on leaving Rome, went to Spain. If to these early testimonies we add the later one of Venantius Fortunatus, in the sixth century, who expressly asserts that St. Paul went to Cadiz (which is described by the line, "Transit et oceanum, vel quâ facit insula portum"), etc.; of Theodoret ('Ps. xvi.'), who says of St. Paul that "he came to Spain;" of St. Jerome, who, following Eusebius' 'Chronicon' (A. 2083), places Paul's martyrdom in the fourteenth year of Nero (A.D. 67 or 68), three or four years after his liberation from his first confinement ('Catal. Script. Ecclesiast.');

—we have sufficient external testimony on which to rest an attempt to assign a later date to the pastoral Epistles than that which is bounded by the close of St. Luke's narrative. Assuming, then, that Paul's first confinement at Rome terminated in the spring of A.D. 63, and that he immediately, according to his original intention (Rom. xv. 24), went to Spain, we may assign two years to his visit to Spain, and possibly to Britain, and place his return to Cadiz in the early spring of A.D. 65. Proceeding thence toward the former scene of his labours, he would go to Crete, and perhaps stay one month there (Titus i. 3). Leaving Titus there, he sailed to Miletus, say on the 1st of April (2 Tim. iv. 20), and wrote from thence the Epistle to Titus. He may have gone to Ephesus from Miletus, but more

probably (Acts xx. 25) sent Timothy there, perhaps intending to follow him; but, from circumstances with which we are unacquainted, he thought it better to go straight to Macedonia (1 Tim. i. 3), and wrote 1 Timothy from Troas, where he had his writing apparatus (2 Tim. iv. 13). He had intended to go back from Macedonia to Ephesus (1 Tim. iii. 14; iv. 13), but again his intentions were frustrated, and *possibly* he sent for Timothy to Macedonia (2 Tim. i. 4) before he proceeded to Corinth. Be this as it may, he certainly went to Corinth (2 Tim. iv. 20), and thence to Nicopolis, situated in Epirus, but in the province of Achaia. There Titus joined him, say in the month of July, having been relieved by Artemas (Titus iii. 12), Nicopolis being the general rendezvous, and was sent by him into Dalmatia. At the same time, Crescens went to Galatia. Demas, who had also come there among others, or who may have been Paul's travelling companion, on the appearance of danger, returned precipitately to his native place of Thessalonica, and St. Paul proceeded with Luke to Rome, where he may have arrived in August. As his settled plan had been to winter in Nicopolis (Titus iii. 12), it seems most probable that his journey to Rome was not a voluntary one. There is not the slightest hint in Scripture, or in any history, as to the place or the circumstances of his arrest. But knowing that he went to Nicopolis in Epirus, intending to pass the winter there, and that very shortly after he was a prisoner at Rome, the natural inference is that he was arrested by the authorities of the province of Achaia, and by them sent to Rome for trial. His route would be from Aulon, the seaport of Illyria, to Brundisium, and thence by the Via Appia to Rome.

The cause of the arrest of St. Paul is not far to seek. The great fire of Rome, supposed to have been the work of Nero himself, took place "on the night of July 19, A.D. 64" (Lewin, vol. ii. p. 359). Nero, according to the well-known narrative of Tacitus ('Annals,' xv. 44), to divert suspicion from himself, laid the blame of the fire upon the Christians, and inflicted the most atrocious punishments upon them. The persecution, which at first affected only the Christians at Rome, was afterwards extended to Christians in the provinces, and it was made criminal to profess the Christian faith (see the passages quoted by Lewin from Tacitus, Sulpitius Severus, and Orosius). The frequent allusions to persecution and suffering in the First Epistle of St. Peter (1 Pet. ii. 12; iii. 16; iv. 1, 12—16; v. 8, 9) seem to point distinctly to this general persecution. It only required the active malice of any one or more persons to bring any Christian before the Roman governors on a charge of impiety. It is very likely that the bitter enmity of the Jews of Corinth, who plotted against his life a few years before (Acts xx. 3), took advantage of these persecuting edicts to accuse him before the Proconsul of Achaia.

Be this, however, as it may, what is certain is that St. Paul was once more a prisoner at Rome, and may have arrived there in August, as above suggested. It would appear, from 2 Tim. iv. 16, 17, that his case had come before Nero soon after his arrival—say in the end of August or September—

and that he did not expect it to come on again before the winter vacation (2 Tim. iv. 21). He accordingly wrote the Second Epistle to Timothy, in which the uppermost thought was to encourage Timothy, and exhort him not to be cast down by the calamitous state of the Church, and the apostle's imprisonment, of which the news had doubtless spread rapidly from Corinth to Ephesus, but to be ready to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. St. Paul expresses in touching language his own unmoved faith and constancy and trust; complains gently of the defection of false friends; makes loving mention of old kindnesses received from faithful followers now departed; gives earnest counsel to Timothy; foretells coming dangers; presses home faithful warnings and loving exhortations to fearlessness in the duties of his great office; and then ends with a brief statement of the chief events of interest which had occurred since they parted, including his own defence before Nero, together with an earnest request, twice repeated, to Timothy to come to him before the winter. He also mentions that he had sent Tychicus—he does not say when, or from whence—to Ephesus, doubtless for the purpose of taking Timothy's place when he came to Rome.

Here, however, it may be well to emphasize one or two points. One, that the news of St. Paul's being a prisoner must have been communicated to Timothy by some previous message, either from St. Paul himself or, with his privity, possibly by Tychicus, or in some other way, as this Epistle clearly supposes Timothy to be already acquainted with the circumstance. The other, that St. Paul did not expect to be called for his final trial for the next three months at least, since it would take so long for his letter to reach Timothy and for Timothy to travel to Rome. A third point is important to note, viz. that the details given in the last chapter are a distinct proof that the journey to which those details refer—embracing Miletus, Troas, Macedonia, Corinth, and Rome—was a very recent one, and that as the last stage in that journey was Rome, it is demonstrated that this was not the same visit to Rome as that related by St. Luke, which was by way of Malta, Syracuse, Rhegium, and Puteoli.

Still treading upon uncertain ground, we go on to observe that, taking the Epistle to the Hebrews as written at this time, it would appear that Timothy, on receipt of St. Paul's Second Epistle, immediately started to come to Rome, but was arrested on the way, the persecution of Christians being now active in the provinces. The place of his arrest is not indicated, but it may probably have been Achaia, through which he would be passing on his way from Ephesus to Rome. The welcome intelligence, however, had now reached the writer of the Hebrews that Timothy was set at liberty, and was on his way (apparently) to Rome. If St. Paul was the writer of the Epistle, it would appear, further, that at this time—some three or four months later than 2 Timothy—he had hopes of his own speedy liberation. Upon what these hopes were built we have no means of deciding. But several months had elapsed since his "first defence;" Timothy was released; perhaps there was some slackening in the persecution, and some

reason to hope that it had served its turn in diverting suspicion from Nero, and was near its close. Anyhow, he hoped to be "restored unto them soon," and to come to them with Timothy (Heb. xiii. 19, 23).¹

But this expectation was not destined to be fulfilled. Nor do we know whether Timothy arrived in time to see him alive. Perhaps he did, if the traditional date of St. Paul's martyrdom, June 29, is true (Lewin, vol. ii. p. 400), as that would allow plenty of time for Timothy to reach Rome. It would also be intensely interesting to know whether St. Peter and St. Paul met before or at the time of their respective martyrdoms. Had the writing of the Epistle to the Hebrews (supposing it to be St. Paul's) by the apostle of the Gentiles anything to do with a desire on the part of the apostle of the circumcision to show the perfect unity that existed between himself and St. Paul? Were they the same body of Hebrews in whole or in part as those to whom St. Peter wrote his First Epistle? It is certainly remarkable that both Epistles imply that those to whom they were addressed had lately been under grievous persecution, and both have a strong light thrown upon them by the circumstances of the Neronian persecution (Heb. x. 32—34; xi. 32—40; xii. 1—13; xiii. 3; 1 Pet. ii. 12; iii. 14—18; iv. 12—19; v. 8—10). Moreover, the passage 2 Pet. iii. 15 distinctly asserts that St. Paul had written them an Epistle. And if 2 Peter was written to the same body of Christians as 1 Peter was (2 Pet. iii. 1), then we are told, in so many words, that the Epistle of St. Paul to which allusion is made was addressed to the Hebrews "of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia." Could this Epistle be the Epistle to the Hebrews? There is certainly a very strong resemblance in the allegorical teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews to that in the Epistle to the Galatians. Compare the passage about Hagar (Gal. iv. 22—31) with that about Melchisedec (Heb. v., vii.; Gal. iii. 11 with Heb. x. 38; Gal. iii. 20 with Heb. xii. 24, etc.; and, as regards the particular reference in 2 Pet. iii. 15, it seems to be justified by Heb. ix. 28 and x. 35—39, better than by any other passage in St. Paul's Epistles. But if it is St. Paul's, why does it not bear his name, as all his other Epistles do? It is impossible to give a decided answer to this question. But a concurrence of several slight indications suggests a possible explanation. The mention of St. Paul by St. Peter in 2 Pet. ii. 15; the fact that St. Paul did write a letter to those Hebrew Christians who were under St. Peter's special charge (2 Pet. iii. 15); the coming of Mark to St. Paul at Rome (2 Tim. iv. 11) from St. Peter at Babylon (1 Pet. v. 13); the mission of Crescens to Galatia (2 Tim. iv. 10); and the presence of St. Peter and St. Paul together at Rome at the time of their martyrdoms, as related by Clemens Romanus, Eusebius, and others;—all point to some intercourse between the two apostles about this time. It occurs to one, therefore, that St. Peter might, in order to emphasize the union between himself and St. Paul, and between the Jewish and Gentile Churches, have

¹ If the reading of the T.R. of Heb. x. 34, *δεσμοῖς μου*, is true, it supplies a direct testimony to the imprisonment of the writer. But without it Heb. xiii. 18 is sufficient.

requested St. Paul (through Mark or otherwise) to write to the Jews of the Dispersion, and that St. Paul, in complying with the request, with his usual delicacy of feeling, may have withheld his apostolic style, and given his Epistle more the form of a treatise than of a letter (see, too, Heb. xiii. 22).

Not, however, to dwell upon uncertain speculations, the practical matter is that, if the Epistle to the Hebrews was written at this time, we may register the further fact of Timothy's imprisonment and release, and, if written by St. Paul, that of his own expectation of being released, and must also modify the statement in the note to 2 Tim. iv. 22, that we have there the last utterance of the great apostle.

Upon the whole, we conclude, with confidence, that the pastoral Epistles were written subsequently to St. Paul's imprisonment at Rome related in Acts xxviii., and shortly before his martyrdom in the imperial city as related in ecclesiastical history.

3. As regards the absolute date of the pastoral Epistles, they may, with most probability, be assigned to the year A.D. 65, A.D. 66, or A.D. 67, according as St. Paul's martyrdom is assigned to A.D. 66, A.D. 67, or A.D. 68. Eusebius ('*Chronic.*' A., 2083) says, under the thirteenth year of Nero, that Peter and Paul suffered martyrdom; while Jerome places it in the fourteenth year. It is impossible to arrive at certainty in the matter. Some considerations point strongly to A.D. 65 for the Epistles, and A.D. 66 for the martyrdom.

§ 3. THE CONTENTS AND STYLE OF THE PASTORAL EPISTLES.

The contents and style of these Epistles need detain us but a short time, having been already partially discussed in the preceding pages. In regard to style, the three Epistles go together, and show plain indications of having been written nearly at the same time. But in regard to their contents, the Epistle to Titus and the First Epistle to Timothy go together, and the Second Epistle to Timothy stands alone. The object and motive of the two first were precisely similar. Paul, having left Titus in the temporary oversight of the Churches of Crete, and Timothy in that of the Church of Ephesus, writes plain practical instructions to both of them how to order and rule the Churches committed to them. The conduct of the public prayers, the qualifications of the clergy, the discipline of the Church societies, the example to be set to the Christian communities by the chief pastor, together with earnest warnings in regard to growing heresies, make up the bulk of both Epistles, supplemented by a few directions peculiar to each case. Nothing can be more obvious, more artless, and less open to suspicion of any concealed motive, than the treatment of the subjects in hand. The Second Epistle to Timothy is of a different character, as it was caused by wholly different circumstances. Its main purpose was to encourage Timothy, under the new danger which had come upon the Church through the Neronian persecutions, and the apostle's imprisonment under a capital charge. By his own noble example of faith and constancy, by

cogent reasonings and exhortations, and by the strongest Christian motives, St. Paul strives to comfort and sustain Timothy under the trying and perilous circumstances in which he was placed, and adds some prophetic warnings concerning coming heresies, and directions as to how Timothy is to meet them. A brief statement of the present condition of his affairs at Rome, with a pressing entreaty to Timothy, twice repeated, to hasten to him, and the usual salutations, complete the Epistle.

Some remarkable features of the style of the pastoral Epistles have been pointed out in the preceding sections. They cannot be too carefully weighed by those who would form a sound judgment on the difficult questions connected with them. The fact of there being a hundred and sixty-five words, nearly all good classical Greek, which occur in the pastoral Epistles, but nowhere else in the New Testament, and few of them in the LXX. (see Appendix); about thirty common to the pastoral Epistles and the Epistles of St. Paul, not found elsewhere in the New Testament (with only three or four exceptions); and twenty-two found elsewhere in the New Testament only in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistles of St. Peter and St. James, in St. Luke and the Acts of the Apostles (p. 9),—are significant facts, which, if rightly used, must throw light upon the situation. The natural inferences from them, and from the heretical opinions referred to, and the exact phase of Church government and Church institutions disclosed, undoubtedly is that these Epistles belong to a somewhat later period than the other Epistles of St. Paul; that in the interval St. Paul had read a good deal of classical Greek; that the Epistle to the Hebrews was either St. Paul's composition, or, at least, that he had a good deal to do with it; that St. Peter had seen St. Paul's Epistles, or some of them; and that both writers were acquainted with the Acts of the Apostles.

With regard to the general scheme of St. Paul's last journey to Rome, proposed in the preceding pages, it may be well to call attention to the fact that it springs directly from the pastoral Epistles themselves. Assuming, as a starting-point, the expedition to Spain, indicated by Clement of Rome as having immediately preceded Paul's martyrdom, we come in regular order to Crete, Miletus, possibly Ephesus, Troas, Macedonia, Corinth, Nicopolis, Rome. There are no imaginary journeys, or trials at Ephesus, or vacant years to be filled up with supposed events, as in other schemes. But we have one consistent journey, every stage of which is indicated in the Epistles themselves, and the period of one year from spring to winter also indicated, within which the events naturally fall. And it is further satisfactory to find that these indications, together with others above referred to, fall in with the best authenticated ecclesiastical traditions, which bring St. Peter and St. Paul together to Rome in the time of the Neronian persecution, to seal with their blood their united testimony to the truth of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

APPENDIX: LIST OF WORDS PECULIAR TO THE PASTORAL EPISTLES.

ἐπεροδιδασκαλεῖν: 1 Tim. i. 3; vi. 3.	C. ¹	δρέγεται: 1 Tim. iii. 1; vi. 10; Heb. xi. 16.	C., X.
ἀπεράντος: 1 Tim. i. 4.	C., LXX.	ἀνεπιλήπτον: 1 Tim. iii. 2; v. 7; vi. 14.	C.
ἐκζητήσεις: 1 Tim. i. 4.		νηφάλιον: 1 Tim. iii. 2, 11; Titus ii. 2.	C.
μῦθος: 1 Tim. i. 4; iv. 7; 2 Tim. iv. 4; Titus i. 14; 2 Pet. i. 16.	C., LXX., X.	σάφρονα: 1 Tim. iii. 2; Titus i. 8; ii. 2, 5.	C.
ἀστοχήσαντες: 1 Tim. i. 6.	C., LXX.	φιλόξενον: 1 Tim. iii. 2; Titus i. 8; 1 Pet. iv. 9.	C., X.
ἐξετράπησαν: 1 Tim. i. 6; Heb. xii. 13.	C., LXX., X.	διδασκικόν: 1 Tim. iii. 2; 2 Tim. ii. 24.	
ματαιολογία: 1 Tim. i. 6.	C.	πάροις: 1 Tim. iii. 3; Titus i. 7.	C.
διαβεβαιούνται: 1 Tim. i. 7; Titus iii. 8.	C., X.	πλήκτην: 1 Tim. iii. 3; Titus i. 7.	C. (but rarely).
νομίμως: 1 Tim. i. 8; 2 Tim. ii. 5.	C., LXX. (once).	αἰσχροκερδῆ: 1 Tim. iii. 3 (T.R.); 8; Titus i. 7.	C. (rare).
ἀνυποτάκτοις: 1 Tim. i. 9; Titus i. 6; Heb. ii. 8.	C., LXX. (?), X.	ἄμαχον: 1 Tim. iii. 3; Titus iii. 2.	LXX., C.
ἀνοστοίς: 1 Tim. i. 9; 2 Tim. iii. 2.	LXX.	ἀφιλάργυρον: 1 Tim. iii. 3; Heb. xiii. 5.	X.
βεβήλοις: 1 Tim. i. 9; iv. 7; vi. 20; 2 Tim. ii. 16; Heb. xii. 16.	C., LXX., X.	νεόφντον: 1 Tim. iii. 6.	LXX.
πατραλῶσις: 1 Tim. i. 9.	C.	τυφωθείς: 1 Tim. iii. 6; vi. 4; 2 Tim. iii. 4.	C.
μητραλῶσις: 1 Tim. i. 9.	C.	διλόγους: 1 Tim. iii. 8.	
ἀνδροφόνους: 1 Tim. i. 9.	C., LXX.	διαβόλους (in the sense of "slanderers"): 1 Tim. iii. 11; 2 Tim. iii. 3; Titus ii. 3.	C.
ἀνδραποδισταῖς: 1 Tim. i. 10.	C.	διακονήσαντες (in the sense of "serving as deacons"): 1 Tim. iii. 10, 13.	
ἐπύρκοις: 1 Tim. i. 10.	C.	ἐδράνωμα: 1 Tim. iii. 15.	
ὄγκανον (in the sense of "sound," etc.): 1 Tim. i. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 3; Titus ii. 1.	C.	ὁμολογουμένως: 1 Tim. iii. 16.	C., LXX.
βλάσφημος (applied to a person): 1 Tim. i. 13; 2 Tim. iii. 2.		ῥητῶς: 1 Tim. iv. 1. C. (rare; ῥητός common).	
διάκτης: 1 Tim. i. 13.		ὕστερος: 1 Tim. iv. 1.	C., LXX.
ὑπερεπλήθυνεν: 1 Tim. i. 14.		πλάνως (as an adj.): 1 Tim. iv. 1.	C.
πιστὸς ὁ λόγος: 1 Tim. i. 15; iii. 1; iv. 9; 2 Tim. ii. 11; *Titus iii. 8.		ψευδολόγων: 1 Tim. iv. 2.	C.
ἀποδοχῆς: 1 Tim. i. 15; iv. 9.		κεκαυτηριασμένων: 1 Tim. iv. 2.	C.
ὑποτίπαισι: 1 Tim. i. 16; 2 Tim. i. 12.	C.	μετάληψιν: 1 Tim. iv. 3.	C.
ἐντεύξεις: 1 Tim. ii. 1; iv. 5.	C., LXX.	ἀπόβλητον: 1 Tim. iv. 4.	C., LXX.
ὑπεροχῇ (in the sense of "authority"): 1 Tim. ii. 2.	C.	ὑποτιθέμενος: 1 Tim. iv. 6 (in the sense of "putting in mind").	C., LXX.
ἡρεμος: 1 Tim. ii. 2.	C. (late).	μαρτυρουμένη (in the sense of "well spoken of"): 1 Tim. v. 10, frequent in the Epistle to Hebrews, and Acts.	X.
διάγειν: 1 Tim. ii. 2; Titus iii. 3.	C.	ἐντρεφόμενος: 1 Tim. iv. 6.	C.
εὐσεβεία: 1 Tim. ii. 2; iii. 16; iv. 7, 8; vi. 3, 5, 6, 11; 2 Tim. iii. 5; Titus i. 1. Elsewhere only in Acts iii. 12; 2 Pet. i. 3, 6, 11; iii. 7.	X.	γραῶδεις: 1 Tim. iv. 7.	C.
σεμνοτής: 1 Tim. ii. 2; iii. 4 (T.R.); Titus ii. 7.	C.	γύμναζε: 1 Tim. iv. 7; Heb. v. 14; xii. 11; 2 Pet. ii. 14.	C., X.
ἀπόδεκτον: 1 Tim. ii. 3; v. 4.	C.	γυμνασία: 1 Tim. iv. 8.	C., LXX. (once).
μεσίτης (as applied to Jesus Christ): 1 Tim. ii. 5; Heb. viii. 6; ix. 15; xii. 24.	X.	ἀγνεία: 1 Tim. iv. 12; v. 2.	C.
ἀντίλυτρον: 1 Tim. ii. 6.		ἐπιπλήξῃς: 1 Tim. v. 1.	C.
κασπατολή: 1 Tim. ii. 9.		ἐκγονα: 1 Tim. v. 4.	C., LXX.
κόσμιος: 1 Tim. ii. 9; iii. 2.	C.	ἁμοιβὰς: 1 Tim. v. 4.	C., LXX.
πλέγμασι: 1 Tim. ii. 9.	C.	ἀπόδεκτον: 1 Tim. v. 4.	C. (rare).
ἐπαγγέλλεσθαι (in the sense of "to profess"): 1 Tim. ii. 10; vi. 21.	C.	μεμονωμένη: 1 Tim. v. 5.	C.
θεοσεβεία: 1 Tim. ii. 10.	C., LXX.	σταλατῶσα: 1 Tim. v. 6 (and Jas. v. 5).	C., LXX.
τεκνογονία: 1 Tim. ii. 15.		καταλεγέσθω: 1 Tim. v. 9.	C.
		ἐτεκνοτρόφησεν: 1 Tim. v. 10.	C.
		ἐξενοδόχησεν: 1 Tim. v. 10.	C.

¹ "C" denotes that the words to which it is affixed are found in good classical Greek; "LXX." that the words so marked are found in the Septuagint; "X." that they are found in the Epistle to the Hebrews also, or in the Acts, or 1 or 2 Peter.

- ἐπήρκεσεν : 1 Tim. v. 10, 16. C.
καταστρηνάσῃσι : 1 Tim. v. 11. C.
φλύαροι : 1 Tim. v. 13; 4 Macc. C.
περίεργοι : 1 Tim. v. 13 (and Acts xix. 19). C., X.
τεκνογονεῖν : 1 Tim. v. 14. C. (rarely).
οικοδεσποτεῖν : 1 Tim. v. 14. C., LXX.
προκρίματος : 1 Tim. v. 21. C.
πρόσκλησις : 1 Tim. v. 21. C.
ὕδρονότοι : 1 Tim. v. 23. C.
πρόδηλοι : 1 Tim. v. 24, 25; Heb. vii. 14. C., LXX., X.
νοσῶν : 1 Tim. vi. 4. C., LXX.
λογομαχίας : 1 Tim. vi. 4. C.
ὑπόνοιαι : 1 Tim. vi. 4. C.
διαπαρὰτριβαί : 1 Tim. vi. 5. C.
πορισμός : 1 Tim. vi. 5. C., LXX.
σκεπάσματα : 1 Tim. vi. 8. C. (rare).
φιλαργυρία : 1 Tim. vi. 10. C., LXX.
περίπειραν : 1 Tim. vi. 10. C. (rare).
πρᾶπαθείαν (R.T.): 1 Tim. vi. 11. Philo. C.
ἀπρόσιτον : 1 Tim. vi. 16. C. (late).
μακάριος (applied to God) : 1 Tim. i. 11; vi. 15. C.
ἀδηλόγητι : 1 Tim. vi. 17. C.
ἀγαθοεργεῖν : 1 Tim. vi. 18 (ἀγαθοεργός, ἀγαθοεργία). C.
εὐμεταδότους : 1 Tim. vi. 18. C. (rare).
κοινωνικούς : 1 Tim. vi. 18. C.
ἀποθησαυρίζοντες : 1 Tim. vi. 18. C. (rare), LXX. (rare).
παραθήκην (or παρακαταθήκην) : 1 Tim. vi. 20; 2 Tim. i. 12, 14. C.
κενοφωνία : 1 Tim. vi. 20; 2 Tim. ii. 16. C.
ἀντιθέσεις : 1 Tim. vi. 20. C.
μάμμη : 2 Tim. i. 5. C.
δὲ ἦν αἰτίαν : 2 Tim. i. 6, 12; Titus i. 13; Heb. ii. 11. X.
ἀναζωπυρεῖν : 2 Tim. i. 6. C., LXX.
δειλίας : 2 Tim. i. 7. C.
σωφρονισμοῦ : 2 Tim. i. 7. C. (rare).
συγκακοπάθησον : 2 Tim. i. 8. C.
ἔχε : 2 Tim. i. 13; 1 Tim. i. 19; iii. 9 (in a peculiar use). C.
ἀπεστράφησαν (with an accus.): 2 Tim. i. 15; Titus i. 14; Heb. xii. 25. C., X.
ἀνέψυξεν : 2 Tim. i. 16. C.
πραγματείας : 2 Tim. ii. 4. C., LXX.
στρατολογήσαντι : 2 Tim. ii. 4. C.
ἀθλῆ : 2 Tim. ii. 5. C.
λογομαχεῖν : 2 Tim. ii. 14 (ἅπαξ λεγόμενον). C.
χρήσιμον : 2 Tim. ii. 14. C., LXX.
καταστροφή : 2 Tim. ii. 14 (in a moral sense ἅπαξ λεγόμενον); 2 Pet. ii. 6. LXX., X.
ἀνεπαίσχυτον : 2 Tim. ii. 15 (ἅπαξ λεγόμενον). C.
ὁρθοτομούντα : 2 Tim. ii. 15. C., LXX.
περίστασις (in the sense of "avoid") : 2 Tim. ii. 16; Titus iii. 9. Josephus, Lucian. C.
ἀνατρέπουσι : 2 Tim. ii. 18; Titus i. 11. C.
εὐχρηστος : 2 Tim. ii. 21; iv. 11 (Philem. 11). C., LXX. (once).
νεωτερίκας : 2 Tim. ii. 22. Josephus. C.
ἀπαιδεύτους : 2 Tim. ii. 23. C., LXX.
γεννώσι (in a figurative sense) : 2 Tim. ii. 23. C.
ἀνεξίκακον : 2 Tim. ii. 24. C. (late).
ἀντιδιατιθέμενους : 2 Tim. ii. 25 (ἅπαξ λεγόμενον). C.
ἀνανήψωσιν : 2 Tim. ii. 26. C. (somewhat rare).
ἐζωγράμεινοι : 2 Tim. ii. 26; Luke v. 10. C., LXX.
φίλαντοι : 2 Tim. iii. 2. C. (Aristotle).
φιλάργυροι : 2 Tim. iii. 2; Luke xvi. 14. C., X.
ἀχάριστοι : 2 Tim. iii. 2; Luke vi. 35. C., LXX., X.
ἄσπονδοι : 2 Tim. iii. 3 (omitted in R.T. Rom. i. 31). C.
ἀκρατεῖς : 2 Tim. iii. 3. C.
ἀνήμεροι : 2 Tim. iii. 3. C.
ἀφιλάγαθοι : 2 Tim. iii. 3. C. (φιλάγαθος, Aristotle).
φιλήδονοι : 2 Tim. iii. 4. C.
φιλόθεοι : 2 Tim. iii. 4. C. (Aristotle).
ἀποτρέπου : 2 Tim. iii. 5. C.
ἐνδύνοντες : 2 Tim. iii. 6. C.
γυναικάρια : 2 Tim. iii. 6. C. (late).
κατεφθάρμενα : 2 Tim. iii. 8; 2 Pet. ii. 12. C., X.
ἀγωγῇ : 2 Tim. iii. 10. C. (Aristotle), LXX.
γόνυ : 2 Tim. iii. 13. C.
ἐπιστάθης : 2 Tim. iii. 14. C., LXX.
θεόπνευστος : 2 Tim. iii. 16. C.
ἐπανόρθωσιν : 2 Tim. iii. 16. C. (Aristotle, etc.), LXX.
ἄρτιος : 2 Tim. iii. 16. C.
κνηθόμενοι : 2 Tim. iv. 3. C.
ἐπισωρεύουσιν : 2 Tim. iv. 3. C. (late and rare).
ἀναλύσεις : 2 Tim. iv. 6. C.
φελόνην : 2 Tim. iv. 13. C.
μεμβράνας : 2 Tim. iv. 13. C.
χαλκεύς : 2 Tim. iv. 14. C.
παρεγένετο (in a technical sense) : 2 Tim. iv. 16 (R.T.). C.
ἄψευδής : Titus i. 2. C.
C., LXX. (once; Symmachus once).
ἐπιδιωρόμενος : Titus i. 5. C. (late and rare).
ὀργίλος : Titus i. 7. C., LXX.
φιλάγαθος : Titus i. 8. C.
C. (rare), LXX. (once, Wisd. vii. 22).
ἐγκρατής : Titus i. 8. C.
ματαιολόγος : Titus i. 10. C.
ἐπιστομίζω : Titus i. 11. C.
βδελυκτός : Titus i. 16. LXX.
ἱεροπρεπής : Titus ii. 3; 4 Macc. (twice). C.
κατάστημα : Titus ii. 3; 3 Macc. (once). C.
καλοδιδάσκαλος : Titus ii. 3 (ἅπαξ λεγόμενον). C.
σωφρονίζουσι : Titus ii. 4. C.
φιλόανδρους : Titus ii. 4. C.

οἰκουρός, or οἰκουργός: Titus ii. 5.	C.	διάγοντες (τὸν βίον): Titus iii. 3; 1 Tim. ii. 2.	C., LXX.
ἀδιαφορία: Titus ii. 7.	C. (ἀδιάφορος).	στηγητός: Titus iii. 3.	C.
ἀκατάγνωστος: Titus ii. 8; 2 Macc. iv. 7.		φροντίζωσι: Titus iii. 8.	C., LXX.
σαῦριος (adj.): Titus ii. 11; Wisd. i. 14; 3 Macc. vii. 18.	C.	ἀνωφελεῖς: Titus iii. 9; Heb. vii. 18.	C., X., LXX.
περιούσιον: Titus ii. 14.	LXX.	αἰρετικόν: Titus iii. 10.	C.
περιφρονεῖτω: Titus ii. 15; 4 Macc. vi. 9.		ἐξέστραπτται: Titus iii. 11.	C., LXX.

The result of the above enumeration is that there are—

165 words found only in the pastoral Epistles.

11 only in the pastoral Epistles and Hebrews.

11 only in the pastoral Epistles, Peter, James, Luke, and the Acts.

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§ 5. LITERATURE ON THE PASTORAL EPISTLES.

A considerable range of literature, both English and German, has gathered round the question of the authorship of the pastoral Epistles. The following are some of the chief works bearing on it.

English: Dean Alford's 'Prolegomena to the Pastoral Epistles,' a very able and conclusive statement; "Introduction to the Pastoral Epistles," in the 'Speaker's Commentary,' by Professor Wace; article by Dr. Salmon, in the *Christian Observer*, 1877, p. 801; "Introduction to the Epistles to Timothy," in Dr. Schaal's 'Popular Commentary on the New Testament,' by Dean Plumptre; article on "Timothy Epistles," in 'Dictionary of the Bible,' by Dean Plumptre; "Introduction to the Pastoral Epistles of St. Paul," in 'New Testament Commentary for English Readers,' edited by Bishop Ellicott, by Canon Spence; "Excursus on the Genuineness of the Pastoral Epistles," in the Appendix to vol. ii. of Farrar's 'Life and Work of St. Paul'; "Appendix on the Date of the Pastoral Epistles," in Conybeare and Howson's 'Life and Epistles of St. Paul'; see also Paley's 'Horæ Paulinæ,' ch. xi.—xiii.

Translated from the German: "Introduction to Pastoral Epistles," in Meyer's 'Commentary,' by Huther; "General Introduction to Pastoral Epistles," by Wiesinger, in Olshausen's 'Biblical Commentary.'

The above all support the authenticity of the pastoral Epistles, and some of them with great ability and learning. Alford adds the following list: Hug, Bertholdt, Fielmoser, Guericke, Böhl, Curtius, Klug, Heydenreich, Mack, Planck, Wegscheider, Beckhaus. Some German critics, as Schleiermacher, J. E. C. Schmidt, Ustin, Lücke, Neander, and Bleek, only reject 1 Timothy, but accept Titus and 2 Timothy as genuine (Davidson, vol. ii. p. 73).

Of those which impugn the authenticity of the pastoral Epistles in whole, the following are the most important.

Of *English* writers: Dr. Davidson, 'Introduction to the Study of the New Testament' (2nd edit., vol. ii. pp. 21—93). But Dr. Davidson states the case so unfairly as to make his argument valueless. The statement (p. 26), most weighty if true, that the theory of "Paul's release and second imprisonment arose from exegetical difficulties inherent in the Epistles themselves," and that "the entire hypothesis is a fiction intended to prop up the authenticity of the writings," is absolutely unfounded in truth. The testimonies of Clement, the Muratorian Fragment, Eusebius, Jerome, Chrysostom, Venantius Fortunatus, and others, to a journey to Spain and a second imprisonment, have nothing whatever to do with "exegetical difficulties." They may be vague and unsatisfactory, but they are an entirely independent evidence of a belief prevalent in the early Church, that St. Paul did go to Spain, and did undergo a second imprisonment at Rome. The pastoral Epistles confirm this belief. Again, such criticisms as that Clement would not have said ἐλθὼν of St. Paul "going" to Spain (p. 22), and that τὸ τέρμα τῆς δόσεως means "the western part of the empire generally," are surely unworthy of a scholar. There is also a strange incongruity in borrowing Baur's plausible assertion that the phrase, ἀντιθέσεις τῆς ψευδονόμου γνώσεως (p. 65), is due to

Marcion, and yet placing the writing of the pastoral Epistles between A.D. 115 and 125 (p. 69), when Marcion was a youth, and had written nothing. The objections, too, to the style and matter of the pastoral Epistles are most captious, and for the most part irrelevant. Tate's 'Continuous History of St. Paul' is quoted by Dr. Davidson.

Of German writers the first was Eichhorn, 'Introduction to the New Testament'; then came Baur's elaborate works, 'Die Pastoral-briefe des Apostel Paulus,' and 'Der Apostel Paulus'; De Wette followed him, more or less, in his 'Kurz-gefassten Handbuch,' placing the Epistles, however, before the middle of the second century; then Schott, Schrader ('Der Apostel Paulus'), Credner ('Einleitung'); and, quoted by Dr. Farrar ('St. Paul,' ii. 514), Zeller, Hilgenfeld, Schenkel, Ewald, Hausrath, Renan, Pfleiderer ('Paulinism'), Krenkel, Reuss ('Des Epitres'), etc.

The question of authenticity really turns upon whether or no there are any distinct indications in the pastoral Epistles of the Gnostic heresy having then assumed the proportions that it attained under Marcion in the middle of the second century. The one suspicious phrase is the ἀντιθέσεις τῆς ψευδωνύμου γνώσεως, because ἀντιθέσεις was the name of one of Marcion's works, and γνώσις is the proper designation of the doctrine of the Gnostics. But there is not the slightest improbability in the peculiar style of teaching meant by ἀντιθέσεις having begun in the time of St. Paul, or in the conceited claim to exclusive γνώσις having been already made by the precursor of Marcion and his brother heretics.

Excursus on the Testimony of Hegesippus as preserved by Eusebius,
'Ecl. Hist.,' iii. xxxii.

Eusebius quotes Hegesippus as saying that, till the death of the apostles, the Church had been as a pure virgin; but that when the apostles were all dead, τῆς ἀθέου πλάνης τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐλάβανεν ἡ σύστασις, impious error was first formed into a compact system, through the deceit of the false teachers (τῶν ἑτεροδιδασκάλων); who, now having no apostle to oppose them, dared to oppose the preaching of the truth by the preaching of science falsely so called (τὴν ψευδωνύμου γνώσιν). The natural and obvious inference from this passage is that Hegesippus was acquainted with St. Paul's First Epistle to Timothy, and quoted its *ipsissima verba* to show what had taken place in spite of his apostolic warning, though in accordance with his apostolic prediction (1 Tim. iv.). The ἑτεροδιδασκαλοὶ who lurked in secret in the apostle's time, and carried on their enterprise "against the sound canon of saving doctrine" in darkness, had now emerged into the light, and formed schismatical and heretical communities. The passage is a strong testimony to the authenticity of 1 Timothy. The suggestion that Hegesippus was an Ebionite is absolutely baseless. All we know of him stamps him as a Catholic Christian (see art. "Hegesippus," in the 'Dictionary of Christian Biography'). The contradiction between Hegesippus's statement, and the representation of an incipient heresy existing in St. Paul's time, as gathered from 1 Timothy, exists only in Dr. Baur's imagination.

Excursus on the Passage in Clement's 'Epistle to the Corinthians' bearing upon
St. Paul's Visit to Spain.

The passage, as found in Hefele's edition of the 'Apostolic Fathers,' is as follows: 'Ὁ Πέτρος διὰ ζῆλον ἄδικον οὐχ' ἓνα οὐδὲ δύο, ἀλλὰ πλείονας ὑπένεγκεν πόνους, καὶ οὕτω μαρτυρήσας ἐπορεύθη εἰς τὸν ὀφειλόμενον τόπον τῆς δόξης. Διὰ ζῆλον καὶ ὁ Παῦλος ὑπομονῆς βραβεῖον ὑπέσχετο, ἐπτάκις δεσμὰ φορέσας, φυγαδευθεὶς, λιθασθεὶς. Κήρυξ γενόμενος ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ καὶ ἐν τῇ δύσει, τὸ γενναῖον τῆς πίστεως αὐτοῦ κλέος ἔλαβεν, δικαιοσύνην διδάξας ὅλον τὸν κόσμον, καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ τέμας τῆς δύσεως ἔλθων, καὶ μαρτυρήσας ἐπὶ τῶν ἡγουμένων, οὕτως ἀπηλλογῇ τοῦ κόσμου, καὶ εἰς τὸν ἄγιον τόπον ἐπορεύθη, κ.τ.λ.

The exact English of the above is as follows: "Peter, on account of unjust envy,¹ underwent not one or two, but many labours, and so, having borne witness [suffered martyrdom], he went to the place of glory which was his due. On account of envy,

¹ Ζῆλον, difficult to translate exactly. It means envy, jealousy, anger, or any strong passion.

Paul too received the prize of endurance, having been in chains seven times, expelled, stoned. Having preached [the gospel] both in the East and in the West, he obtained the noble reputation due to his faith. Having taught righteousness to the whole world, and having come as far as the utmost bounds of the West, and having borne witness [suffered martyrdom] before the rulers, he so passed out of the world, and came to the holy place," etc.

It is to be observed on the above passage: (1) That the coupling together of Peter and Paul as martyrs is decidedly in favour of St. Paul's second imprisonment at Rome, and the ecclesiastical tradition which makes him and Peter suffer martyrdom at the same time. (2) That the phrase *μαρτυρίας*, being used of both, is a proof that *martyrdom*, and not mere *confession*, is meant in St. Paul's case. (3) That his having come to "the bounds of the West" must mean something precise and definite, different from the general statement that he preached the gospel in the West. (4) That Clement, writing from Rome, would never have called Rome "the bound of the West," but that by Roman writers Spain, and especially Gades, or Cadiz, was habitually described as the extreme western point. "Omni^{bus} in terris quæ sunt a Gadibus usque Auroram et Gangem" (Juvenal, 'Sat.,' x.). Statius calls Gades "cubilia solis;" Horace, "remotis Gadibus;" Silius Italicus, "hominum finem Gades." Geryon, King of Hesperia (the West), fed his oxen in the island of Erythria (the isla de Leon, *i.e.* Gades), which was also the name of one of the Hesperides, whose abode was fixed by the earliest traditions on Oceanus, in the extreme West. Strabo calls Gadeira *ἐσχάτη ἰδρυμένη τῆς γῆς* (iii. i. 8), "situated at the extreme end of the earth." He calls the promontory Hieron (near Gades) "the most western point [or, 'boundary-mark,' *σημείον*], not only of Europe, but of the whole world" (iii. i. 4). Pindar, too, speaks of Gades as the point beyond which no mortal could advance ('Dictionary of Greek and Roman Geography,' art. "Herculis Columnæ"). So that to a Roman, *τὸ πέρα τῆς δόσεως* would be the natural description of Gades. And it is to Gades that Venantius Fortunatus sends St. Paul. "Transit et oceanum, vel quæ facit insula portum," etc., which, of course, means Gades. (5) The visit to the extreme bounds of the West immediately precedes his martyrdom at Rome, in Clement's enumeration of St. Paul's doings. (6) The use of *ὅπως*, in the passage about St. Peter which precedes, teaches us not to put a full stop after *ἡγουμένων*, and begin a new sentence with *ὅπως*, as in the Latin version in Hefele, and Dr. Farrar's quotation; but to construe it, as is much more natural and more in accordance with Greek idiom, with *ἀπηλλὰγχ* (as the previous *ὅπως* is with *ἐπερεύθη*), as referring to the circumstances under which he passed away and went to a better place. (7) The manuscript text of Clement is very imperfect. The difficulty of breaking up the passage into its component parts, due apparently to the absence of proper copulative particles, may probably be assigned to this cause. But there is no ground whatever for saying, with Dr. Farrar (p. 606), that, "if Spain is intended, and if *μαρτυρίας* means 'martyrdom,' then the author, taken literally, would imply that St. Paul perished in Spain." What the writer says is that, having successively taught righteousness to the whole world, reached the utmost bounds of the West, and suffered martyrdom before the rulers, he at last passed out of this world and received his reward in the kingdom of heaven. (See translation of the 'Epistle of Clement' in Bishop Lightfoot's 'Appendix to St. Clement of Rome,' which agrees substantially with that given above.)

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY.

EXPOSITION.

CHAPTER I.

Ver. 1.—*Christ Jesus for Jesus Christ, A.V. and T.R.; according to for by, A.V.; Christ Jesus our hope for Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope, A.V. and T.R.* For the inscription, comp. Rom. i. 1, 5; 1 Cor. i. 1; 2 Cor. i. 1; Gal. i. 1; Eph. i. 1; Col. i. 1; 2 Tim. i. 1; Titus i. 1; in all which St. Paul asserts his apostleship, and ascribes it directly to “the will of God” (comp. Gal. i. 11, 12, etc.). According to the commandment (as Titus i. 3) expresses the same truth, but possibly with a more direct reference to the command, “Separate me Paul and Barnabas,” recorded in Acts xiii. 2. This assertion of his apostolic authority indicates that this is not a private letter to Timothy, but a public Church document for all time. **Our hope** (comp. Col. i. 27; Acts xxviii. 20).

Ver. 2.—*My true child in faith for my own son in the faith, A.V.; peace for and peace, A.V.; the Father for our Father, A.V. and T.R.; Christ Jesus for Jesus Christ, A.V. and T.R.* **My true child in faith.** A most awkward phrase, which can only mean that Timothy was St. Paul’s true child because his faith was equal to St. Paul’s, which is not St. Paul’s meaning. Timothy was St. Paul’s own son, because he had begotten him in the gospel (1 Cor. iv. 14—16; Philem. 10)—his spiritual son. This is best expressed as in the A.V. by “in the faith” (comp. Titus i. 4, where the same idea is expressed by *κατὰ κοινὴν πίστιν*). **Grace, mercy, and peace.** This varies from the blessing at the beginning of the Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philipians, Colossians, and Thessalonians, by the addition of the word “mercy,” as in 2 Tim. i. 2 and Titus i. 4 in the T.R., and also in 2 John 3 and Jude 2. It seems in St. Paul to connect itself with that deeper sense of the need and of the enjoyment of mercy which went

with his deepening sense of sin as he drew towards his end, and harmonizes beautifully with what he says in vers. 12—16. The analogy of the other forms of blessing quoted above strongly favours the sense **our Father** rather than **the Father**. Whether we read *ἡμῶν* with the T.R. or omit it with the R.T., the idea of **Father** is contrasted, not with that of **Son**, but with that of **Lord**; the two words express the relation of the Persons of the Godhead, not to each other, but to the Church.

Ver. 3.—*Exhorted for besought, A.V.; tarry for abide still, A.V.; was going for went, A.V.; certain men for some, A.V.; not to teach a different for that they teach no other, A.V.* **Exhorted** (*παρεκάλειν*). In about sixty places this word has the sense of “beseech,” “entreat,” “desire,” “pray,” which is more suitable to this passage than the R.V. **exhort**. It is a strong expression, and seems to imply that Timothy had been anxious to go with St. Paul to Macedonia, to share his labours and wait upon him; but that St. Paul, with that noble disinterestedness which characterized his whole life, had, not without difficulty, persuaded him to abide at Ephesus. **Tarry.** Here again the R.V. is unfortunate. The exact sense of *προσμεῖναι* is “to stay on,” or, as in the A.V., “to abide still.” The word tells us that Timothy was already at Ephesus when he received the request from St. Paul to stay on there instead of going to Macedonia. There is nothing in the phrase that implies that St. Paul was at Ephesus himself when he made the request to Timothy. It may have been made by message or by letter. **When I was going.** Some commentators have endeavoured to explain *πορεύμενος* as applying to Timothy, or as if the order were *ὅνα πορεύμενος παραγγέλῃς*; but the Greek will not admit of it. **Charge** (*παραγγέλλεις*); a word implying authority, almost invariably rendered

"command" or "charge." It is taken up in ver. 18 (*ταύτην τὴν παραγγελίαν*), "This charge," etc. Teach a different doctrine (*ἐτεροδιδασκαλεῖν*). This is one of the many words peculiar to the pastoral Epistles. It only occurs here and ch. vi. 3. It is formed from *ἐτεροδιδάσκαλος*, a teacher of other than right doctrine, and means "to play the part of a teacher of other than right doctrine," just as in ecclesiastical language *ἐτερόδοξος* means "one who holds opinions contrary to that which is orthodox," and such as do so are said *ἐτεροδοξεῖν*. The classical sense is a little different, "one who holds a different opinion"—"to be of a different opinion." The introduction of the word into the vocabulary of Scripture is a sign of the somewhat later age to which this Epistle belongs, when heresies were growing and multiplying. Other similar compounds are *ἐτερόγλωσσος* (1 Cor. xiv. 21) and *ἐτεροζυγεῖν* (2 Cor. vi. 14).

Ver. 4.—*To give for give, A.V.; the which for which, A.V.; questionings for questions, A.V.; a dispensation of God for godly edifying, A.V. and T.R. (οἰκονομίαν Θεοῦ for οἰκοδομίαν Θεοῦ); so do I now for so do, A.V. Fables (see ch. iv. 7). If the spirit which gave birth to the fables of the Talmud was already at work among the Jews, we have a ready explanation of the phrase. And that they were Jewish fables (not later Gnostic delusions) is proved by the parallel passage in Titus i. 14, "Not giving heed to Jewish fables." The prevalence of sorcery among the Jews at this time is a further instance of their inclination to fable (see Acts viii. 9; xiii. 6; xix. 13). Endless genealogies. What was the particular abuse of genealogies which St. Paul here condemns we have not sufficient historical knowledge to enable us to decide. But that they were Jewish forms of "vain talking," and not Gnostic, and related to human pedigrees, not to "emanations of æons," may be concluded from the connection in which they are mentioned in Titus iii. 9, and from the invariable meaning of the word *γενεαλογία* itself. It is true that Irenæus ('Contr. Hær.' lib. i.) applies this passage to the Valentinians and their succession of æons (Bythus, Nous, Logos, Anthropos, etc.—in all thirty, male and female); and so does Tertullian, who speaks of the seeds of the Gnostic heresies as already budding in St. Paul's days ('Advers. Valentin.' cap. iii. and elsewhere), and Grotius supports this explanation ('Comment.' 1 Tim. i. 4). But it was very natural that Irenæus and Tertullian, living when the heresies of Valentinus, Marcion, and others were at their height, should so accommodate St. Paul's words—which is all that Irenæus does. On the other hand, neither Irenæus nor Tertullian shows that *γενεαλογία* was a*

word applied to the emanations of the æons in the Gnostic vocabulary. The *genealogies*, then, were Jewish pedigrees, either used *literally* to exalt individuals as being of priestly or Davidic origin (as the pedigrees of the Desposyni, or later of the princes of the Captivity), or used *cabbalistically*, so as to draw fanciful doctrines from the names composing a genealogy, or in some other way which we do not know of (see the writers 'Genealogies of Christ,' ch. iii. § ii. 1; and note C at the end of the volume). *Endless* (*ἀπέραντος*); found only here in the New Testament and so one of the words peculiar to the pastoral Epistles, but used in the LXX. for "infinite," "immeasurable." It means either "endless," "interminable," or, "having no useful end or purpose;" *οὐδὲν χρήσιμον* (Chrysostom). But the former ("interminable") is the better rendering, and in accordance with its classical use. *Questionings* (*ζητήσεις* or *ἐκζητήσεις*, R.T.). (For *ζητήσεις*, see John iii. 25; Acts xxv. 20; and below, ch. vi. 4; 2 Tim. ii. 23; Titus iii. 9; and for the kindred *ζητήματα*, Acts xv. 2; xviii. 15; xxiii. 29; xxv. 19; xxvi. 3.) The reading *ἐκζητήσεις* is only found here. A dispensation of God. This version arises from the Greek *οἰκονομίαν*, which is the reading of the R.T. and almost all manuscripts. The T.R. *οἰκοδομίαν* is thought to be a conjecture of Erasmus, which, from its much easier sense, was taken into the T.R. Taking the reading *οἰκονομίαν*, the phrase, "a dispensation of God which is in faith," must mean the gospel as delivered by revelation and received by faith. These fables and genealogies address themselves, the apostle says, to the disputations, itching curiosity of men's minds, not to their faith. The substance of them is matter of doubtful disputation, not revealed truth. "The dispensation" is better English than "a dispensation." So do I now; or, as the A.V., *so do*, is the conjectural filling up of the unfinished sentence which began "as I exhorted thee." But it is much more natural and simple to take ver. 18 as the apodosis, and the intermediate verses as a digression caused by St. Paul's desire to show how exactly the charge was in agreement with the true spirit of the Law of God.

Ver. 5.—*But for now, A.V.; charge for commandment, A.V.; love for charity, A.V.; a good for of a good, and faith for of faith, A.V. But the end of the charge.* Before proceeding with his sentence, in which he was about solemnly to commit the trust of the episcopate of the Church of Ephesus to Timothy, he breaks off abruptly to show the beneficent character of the charge, viz. the furtherance of that brotherly love and purity of heart and life which are the true fruit of the gospel dispensation, but which some, by

their false doctrine, were so ruthlessly impeding. Each of these phrases, "a pure heart" and "a good conscience" and "faith unfeigned," seems to rebuke by contrast the merely ceremonial cleanness and the defiled conscience and the merely nominal Christianity of these heretical Judaizers (comp. Titus i. 10—16).

Ver. 6.—Which things for which, A.V.; talking for jangling, A.V. Having swerved (*ἀποχῆσαντες*); literally, having missed the mark, as in the margin. It is found in the New Testament only here and ch. vi. 21; 2 Tim. ii. 18. In Eccles. vii. 19 (21, A.V.) and viii. 9 (11, A.V.) it is used in a slightly different sense, "forego" and "miss." In Polybius and Plutarch repeatedly, "to miss the mark," "to fail," with the kindred *ἀποχος*, *ἀστοχία*, *ἀστόχημα*. These men missed the true end of the gospel—purity of heart and conscience and life—and only reached vain and boastful talking. Have turned aside (*ἐξερπάτησαν*); ch. v. 15; vi. 20; 2 Tim. iv. 4; Heb. xii. 13; but not elsewhere in the New Testament. It is found in the active voice in the LXX., and is common in all voices in classical Greek. Vain talking (*ματαιολογία*); here only in the New Testament, and not found in the LXX., but used by Strabo, Plutarch, and Porphyry. The adjective *ματαιολόγος* is used in Titus i. 10, and applied especially to those "of the circumcision." The Latin equivalents are *vaniloquus* and *vaniloquium*. Livy's description of a *vaniloquus* is "Maria terrasque inani sonitu verborum complevit" (lib. xxxv. 48; comp. Jude 16).

Ver. 7.—Though they understand for understanding, A.V.; confidently affirm for affirm, A.V. Teachers of the Law (*νομοδιδάσκαλοι*, as Luke v. 17; Acts v. 34). This, again, distinctly marks the Jewish origin of these heretics. Though they understand, etc. So our Lord rebuked the scribes and teachers of the Law in his day: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God;" "Ye do greatly err" (Matt. xxii. 29; Mark xii. 27; Matt. xii. 7, etc.; compare, too, Rom. ii. 17—24). They confidently affirm (*διαβεβαιούνται*). Elsewhere in the New Testament only in Titus iii. 8, "I will that thou affirm confidently." So in classical Greek, "to maintain strongly," "to be positive." This was right in the minister of Christ declaring Divine truth, but very wrong in these vain janglers. The nature of their confident assertions is apparent from what follows—they spoke of the Law, but not lawfully.

Ver. 8.—The Law is good (see the similar statement in Rom. vii. 12). The Jews thought that St. Paul spoke against the Law (comp. Acts vi. 13, 14), because he vindicated its true use (Rom. x. 4; Gal.

iii. 24; iv. 4, 5, etc.). But he everywhere speaks of the Law as good and holy. If a man—i.e. a teacher of the Law—use it lawfully; knowing its proper use, as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 9.—As knowing for knowing, A.V.; Law for the Law, A.V.; unruly for disobedient, A.V.; and sinners for and for sinners, A.V.; the unholy for unholy, A.V. Law is not made for a righteous man. It is much better to render *νόμος*, with the A.V., "the Law," as e.g. Rom. ii. 12—14. The whole proposition relates to the Law of Moses, which these teachers perverted and tried to force upon Christians, being ignorant that the Law was made, not for the righteous, but for sinners. For is not made, we might render *does not apply to or is not in force against*. *Κεῖται* with the dative following (as 2 Macc. iv. 11) suggests some such meaning, somewhat different from the simple *νόμος κεῖται*. This freedom of the righteous from the Law is what St. Paul everywhere asserts (Rom. vi. 14; viii. 2; Gal. ii. 19; iii. 25; v. 18, etc.), the Law being viewed, not as a holy rule of life, but as a system of penalties—"a Law of sin and death." That *νόμος* here means the Law of Moses is further evident from this, that in the following list the apostle clearly follows the general order of the Decalogue, taking first the offences against the first table, and then sins against the fifth, sixth, seventh, and ninth commandments (compare, too, ver. 11 with Rom. ii. 16). Lawless (*ἀνόμοις*); with no special reference to its etymology, but meaning simply "transgressors," "wicked," as Luke xxii. 37; Acts ii. 23; 2 Thess. ii. 8 (A.V.), and very frequently in the LXX. Unruly (*ἀνυπότακτοις*); insubordinate, resisting lawful authority. In the LXX. for the Hebrew *לִבְיָלִי* (1 Sam. ii. 12, Symmachus), and perhaps Prov. xvi. 27. In the New Testament it is peculiar in this sense to the pastoral Epistles, being only found here and in Titus i. 6, 10. In Heb. ii. 10 it has the classical sense of "unsubdued." The express application of the word in Titus i. 10, to the "unruly talkers of the circumcision," shows that St. Paul has them in view here also. Ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane. All terms implying offences against the first table. *Ἀσεβείαι* (with the kindred *ἀσεβεία* and *ἀσεβέω*) is always rendered "ungodly," "ungodliness," "to act ungodly;" *ἁμαρτωλοῖς*, sinners, viz. against God; *ἀνόμοις*, unholy (found only here and at 2 Tim. iii. 2 in the New Testament, but frequent in the LXX.) is the contrary to *ὁσιος*, holy, saintly; *βεβήλοις* (whence *βεβήλως*, to profane, Matt. xii. 5; Acts xxiv. 6), profane, of persons and things not consecrated to God—peculiar in the New Testament to the pastoral Epistles

(ch. iv. 7; vi. 20; 2 Tim. ii. 16;) and Heb. xii. 16, but found commonly in the LXX. and in classical Greek. *Πατράδας* and *μητράδας*, not murderers, but, as in the margin, "smilers, ill-users of father and mother." Both words are only found here in the New Testament, but found in Demosthenes, Aristophanes, etc. The allusion here is to Exod. xxi. 15, where the Hebrew word for "smiteth" is *מָתָה*, which does not necessarily mean "to smite to death" any more than *ἀλὼδα* does. *Ἀνδροφόνους*, *man-slayers*; found only here in the New Testament, but used in 2 Macc. ix. 28 and in classical writers. The reference is to Exod. xxi. 12.

Ver. 10.—*Fornicators for whoremongers, A.V.; abusers of themselves with men for them that defile themselves with mankind, A.V.; false swearers for perjured persons, A.V.; contrary for that is contrary, A.V.; the sound for sound, A.V. πόρνοις, ἀρσενικοῖς*. The latter word is only found in the New Testament here and 1 Cor. vi. 9, and nowhere else; but the reference is to Lev. xviii. 22, where the two words *ἐφρεύς* and *κόρη* occur, though not in actual composition. *Ἀνδραποδισταῖς, men-stealers*; only here in the New Testament, but very common, with its many kindred forms, *ἀνδραποδίζ(εν, ἀνδραποδισμός, ἀνδραποδόν*, etc., in classical Greek. The last word is found once in the LXX., viz. in 3 Macc vii. 5. The crime of man-stealing is denounced Exod. xxi. 16; Deut. xxiv. 7. *Ψεδοῖται, ἐπιόρκους, liars, false swearers*. The latter word only occurs here in the New Testament—the verb *ἐπιορκέω* in Matt. v. 33—and twice in the LXX., where *ἐπιορκία* is also found (Wisd. xiv. 25); all are common in classical Greek. The reference is to Lev. xix. 11, 12. The order of the offences, as above noted, is that of the Decalogue. The sound doctrine. The article is better omitted, as in the A.V. This is one of the many phrases peculiar to the pastoral Epistles. Though the verb *δυναίειν* occurs three times in St. Luke's Gospel and once in 3 John 2 in its literal sense of bodily health, it is only in the pastoral Epistles that it is applied to doctrine (see ch. vi. 3; 2 Tim. i. 13; iv. 3; Titus i. 9, 13; ii. 1, 2; and note on 2 Tim. iv. 3).

Ver. 11.—*The gospel of the glory for the glorious gospel, A.V. The gospel of the glory of the blessed God*. The phrase, *τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς δόξης τοῦ μακαρίου Θεοῦ*, cannot mean, as in the A.V., "the glorious gospel of the blessed God," except by a very forced construction. It might mean three things: (1) *τῆς δόξης τοῦ Θεοῦ* might be a periphrasis for "God," as Rom. vi. 4, or Exod. xxiv. 16, 17; xxxiii. 18; Lev. ix. 6, 23; Ps. civ. 31; 2 Cor. iv. 6; or as "the Name of the Lord" (Prov. xviii. 10; Isa. xxx. 27, etc.); and as

we say "the queen's majesty," the "king's grace." Or (2) "the glory of God" might mean Jesus Christ, who is the Brightness of God's glory, the Image of the invisible God, in whose face the glory of God shines (2 Cor. iv. 4, 6). Or (3) it might mean the gospel which tells of the glory of God, which reveals and proclaims his glory, the glory of his grace (Eph. i. 6, 12), or perhaps here rather the glory of his holiness, which St. Paul's "sound doctrine" pressed for imitation upon all Christians (see ch. vi. 3; comp. 2 Cor. iv. 4, "The gospel of the glory of Christ." Either the first or last is doubtless the true meaning. The blessed God. This and ch. vi. 15 are the only passages in the New Testament where *μακάριος*, blessed, is an epithet of God. Elsewhere "blessed" is *εὐλογητός*; as e.g. Mark xiv. 61; 2 Cor. xi. 31. In classical Greek *μάκαρ* is the proper epithet of the gods; *μάκαρες Θεοί*; *μακάριος* is usually spoken of men or qualities, and especially of the happy dead. It does not appear how or why the apostle here applies *μακάριος* to God. Committed to my trust; literally, *with which I was entrusted*. A thoroughly Pauline statement (comp. Rom. i. 1, 5; ii. 16; Gal. i. 11, 12; Eph. iii. 1—8, etc.).

Ver. 12.—*I thank for and I thank, A.V. and T.R.; him that enabled me, even Christ Jesus our Lord for Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, A.V.; appointing me to his service for putting me into the ministry, A.V. I thank, etc.* This outburst of praise for the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ, who had called him to the ministry of the Word, is caused by the thought, which immediately precedes, of his being entrusted with the gospel. He thus disclaims any notion of merit on his part. That enabled me (*ἐνδυναμώσαντι*). This verb occurs once in the Acts (ix. 22); three times in St. Paul's other Epistles (Rom. iv. 20; Eph. vi. 10; Phil. iv. 13); three times in the pastoral Epistles (here; 2 Tim. ii. 1 and iv. 17); and Heb. xi. 34. It denotes the giving that peculiar power which was the gift of the Holy Ghost, and which was necessary for the work of an apostle to enable him to bear witness to Christ in the face of an adverse world. This power (*δύναμις*) Christ promised to his apostles before his ascension (Acts i. 8). St. Paul received it after his conversion (Acts ix. 22). He continued to hold it throughout his apostleship (Phil. iv. 13); he enjoyed it especially at the approach of his martyrdom (2 Tim. iv. 17). It comprised strength of faith, strength to testify and to preach, strength to endure and suffer. St. Paul's whole course is the best illustration of the nature of the *δύναμις* which Christ gave him (see in Eph. iii. 6 the *χαρίς*, the *διακονία*, and the *δύναμις* all brought

together as here). **Appointing me to his service.** The A.V., *putting me into the ministry*, is a better rendering, because "the ministry" exactly expresses the particular kind of service to which the Lord appointed him (see the exactly parallel passage, Eph. iii. 7). The absence of the article is unimportant (Rom. xii. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 15; 2 Tim. iv. 11). (For the general phrase, comp. Acts xx. 28; 1 Cor. xii. 28; or, still more exactly as regards the grammar, 1 Thess. v. 9.)

Ver. 13.—*Though I was for who was*, A.V. and T.R.; *howbeit for but*, A.V. A blasphemer (βλασφημῶν); applied, as here, to persons, only in 2 Tim. iii. 2; applied to words, Acts vi. 11, 13 (T.R.). The verb βλασφημεῖν, and the substantive βλασφημία, are very common, both in the sense of "blaspheming" and of "railing" or "reviling." St. Paul was a blasphemer because he spoke against the Name of Jesus, which he had since discovered was a Name above all names. A persecutor (διώκτης); only here; but the verb διακείν is applied to St. Paul repeatedly (Acts ix. 4, 5; xxii. 4; xxvi. 11, etc.), and the διώκτης here refers possibly to that very narrative. Injurious (ὀβριστής); only here and Rom. i. 30, where it is rendered "insolent," R.V. The verb ὀβρίζω, both in the New Testament and in classical Greek, means to "treat or use others despitefully," "to outrage and insult" them, not without personal violence (Matt. xxii. 6; Luke xviii. 32; Acts xiv. 5; 1 Thess. ii. 2). The ὀβριστής is one who so treats others. St. Paul was thinking of his own conduct toward the Christians, whom he not only reviled, but handled roughly and cast into prison (Acts viii. 3; ix. 1; xxii. 19). There is no English word which exactly renders ὀβριστής.

Ver. 14.—*Abounded exceedingly for was exceeding abundant*, A.V. Abounded exceedingly (ὑπερπελάνασε); only here in the New Testament or elsewhere except "in Psalterio Salomonis Ps. v. 19, et in fragmento Hermæ ap. Fabricium Bibl. Græc., lib. v. cap. 1" (Schleusner). But the word is thoroughly Pauline (comp. ὑπεραίρωμαι, ὑπερανέλω, ὑπερβάλλω, ὑπερεκτείνω, ὑπερπερισσεύω, ὑπερφύω, and other compounds with ὑπέρ. It is further remarkable, as regards ὑπέρ itself, that of the hundred and fifty-eight times (or thereabouts) that it occurs in the New Testament, one hundred and six are in St. Paul's Epistles, and twelve in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and only forty in all the other books. With faith and love, etc. The grace bestowed upon St. Paul at and after his conversion showed itself in the wonderful faith and love toward Jesus Christ, whom he had previously disbelieved in and reviled, which accompanied that grace (μετὰ

and was the fruit of it, and characterized his whole after-life.

Ver. 15.—*Faithful is the saying for this is a faithful saying*, A.V. Faithful is the saying (πιστὸς ὁ λόγος). This formula is peculiar to the pastoral Epistles (ch. iii. 1; iv. 9; 2 Tim. ii. 11; Titus iii. 8), and seems to indicate that there were a number of pithy sayings, maxims, portions of hymns or of catechetical teaching, current in the Church, and possibly originating in the inspired sayings of the Church prophets, to which the apostle appeals, and to which he gives his sanction. The one appealed to here would be simply, "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." This, St. Paul adds, is worthy of all acceptance—by all, and without any reserve. Acceptation (ἀποδοχῆς); only here and ch. iv. 9, in connection with the same formula. The verb ἀποδέχομαι occurs in Luke viii. 40; Acts ii. 41; xv. 4; xviii. 29; xxiv. 3; xxviii. 30. It contains the idea of a glad, willing acceptance (see note on Acts ii. 41). So doubtless ἀποδοχή also means "hearty reception." I am chief; in respect of his having been a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious." That great sin was indeed freely forgiven by God's grace, but it could never be forgotten by him who had been guilty of it. "Manet altâ mente repositum" (comp. Eph. iii. 8).

Ver. 16.—*As chief for first*, A.V.; *might Jesus Christ for Jesus Christ might*, A.V.; *his long-suffering for long-suffering*, A.V.; *an ensample of for a pattern to*, A.V.; *unto eternal life for to life everlasting*, A.V. That in me as chief; rather, as A.V., first; i.e. both in order of time, and in respect also of the greatness of the sin forgiven. Show forth (ἐνδείκνται; see 2 Tim. iv. 14, note). All his long-suffering; more properly, as Alford, the whole long-suffering; i.e. the entirety of long-suffering—all that was possible, every kind and degree of long-suffering. Ὁ πᾶς with the substantive denotes the whole of a thing: τὸν πάντα χρόνον, "the whole time" (Acts xx. 18); ὁ πᾶς νόμος, "the whole Law" (Gal. v. 14). So in the two examples from Polybius, τῆς πάσης ἀλογιστίας and τῆς πάσης ἀποκτίας, "the utmost unreasonableness," and "the utmost strangeness," the construction is exactly the same. Long-suffering (μακροθυμία); more literally, longanimity; very frequent both in the New Testament and in the LXX. The adjective μακρόθυμος (LXX.) is a translation of the Hebrew תָּיִשׁ, "long," or "slow to anger," to which the opposite is תָּרַץ, ὀξύθυμος (LXX.), "short to anger," i.e. hasty, passionate. The verb μακροθυμέω also occurs frequently, both in the New Testament and in the LXX.: Ἡ ἀγάπη μακροθυμεῖ, "Charity suffereth long" (1 Cor. xiii. 4). For an ex-

sample (πρὸς ὑποτύπωσιν). The word only occurs in the New Testament here and 2 Tim. i. 12; but both it and the verb ὑποτυπῶ are good classical words. The meaning of ὑποτύπωσις is "a sketch" or "outline," and hence "a pattern." This pattern is spoken of as being the property of, being for the use of, them which should hereafter believe. Just as the workman looks at his plan, or outline, by which he is to work, so those future believers would see in Christ's dealings with St. Paul the exact pattern of the long-suffering which they might expect for themselves. Others take ὑποτύπωσις in the sense of "instruction," but this sense cannot be made good. Believe on him unto eternal life. These words hang together. The particular force of πιστεῦεν ἐπ' αὐτῷ, "found in the New Testament only here and Rom. ix. 33; x. 11; and 1 Pet. ii. 6" (Huther)—as distinguished from the other constructions of πιστεῦεν¹—is to "rest," "lean on" (Ellicott). St. Paul thus incidentally affirms that his own faith rested upon Jesus Christ in the full assurance of attaining to eternal life (see ch. vi. 12; 2 Tim. i. 1, 2).

Ver. 17.—*Incorruptible for immortal*, A.V.; *only God for only wise God*, A.V. and T.R. **The King eternal.** The Greek has the unusual phrase, τῷ βασιλεῖ τῶν αἰώνων, "the king of the worlds or ages," which is not found elsewhere in the New Testament, but is found twice in the LXX.—Tobit xiii. 6 and 10—and in the Liturgy of St. James, in the εὐχὴ τῆς ἐνάρξεως and elsewhere. The similar phrase, ὁ Θεὸς τῶν αἰώνων, is also found in Ecclus. xxxvi. 17. In all these passages it is quite clear that the phrase is equivalent to αἰώνιος, Eternal, as a title of the Lord, as in Rom. xvi. 26. The genitive τῶν αἰώνων is qualitative. In Tobit xiii. 6 he is "the Lord of righteousness," i.e. the righteous Lord; and "the King of the ages," i.e. of eternity, i.e. "the eternal King," the King through all the ages. And in ver. 10 it is said, "Bless the eternal King," who, it follows, will, as King, "love the miserable εἰς πάσας τὰς γενέας τοῦ αἰῶνος;" and then it follows, in ver. 12, "They that love thee shall be blessed εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα;" and again in ver. 18, "Bless the Lord, who hath exalted Jerusalem εἰς πάντας τοὺς αἰῶνας;" and the same conception is in the phrase, σὺ εἶ ὁ Θεὸς τῶν αἰώνων. Satan, on the other hand, is ὁ θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου, "the god of this world" (compare such passages as Ps. cii. 24; civ. 31; cv. 8; cxxxv. 13; cxlv. 13; and the doxology in the Lord's Prayer, "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας"). It seems to be, therefore, quite

certain that St. Paul is here using a familiar Jewish phrase for "eternal" which has nothing whatever to do with Gnostic æons. Perhaps in the use of the phrase, βασιλεὺς τῶν αἰώνων, we may trace a contrast passing through the writer's mind between the short-lived power of that hateful βασιλεὺς, Nero, by whom his life would soon be taken away, and the kingdom of the eternal King (comp. ch. vi. 15, 16). *Incorruptible* (ἀφθάρτος); applied to God also in Rom. i. 23, where, as here, it means "immortal" (ὁ μόνος ἔχων ἀθανάσιον, ch. vi. 16), not subject to the corruption of death, just as ἀφθαρσία is coupled with "life" (2 Tim. i. 10) and opposed to "death." So on the other hand, φθαρὰ means "death," φθαρτός, "perishable." Elsewhere it is applied to a crown, to the raised dead, to the inheritance of the saints, to the seed of the new birth, to the apparel of a holy heart, which no rust or moth corrupts (1 Cor. ix. 25; xv. 52; 1 Pet. i. 4, 23; iii. 4). *Invisible* (ἀόρατος); as Col. i. 15; Heb. xi. 27. (See also Rom. i. 20; and comp. ch. vi. 16, for the sense.) The word is used by Philo of God, and of the Word. Here it is especially predicated of God the Father, according to what our Lord says (John i. 18; vi. 46; xiv. 9); though some of the Fathers, Nicene and post-Nicene, predicate it also of the Word or Second Person (Hilary, Chrysostom, etc.). But in Scripture the Son is spoken of as the Manifestation, the Image (εἰκὼν and χαρακτὴρ) of the Father, through whom the Father is seen and known; ἀόρατος, therefore, applies to the Father (see Bishop Lightfoot's note on Col. i. 15). **The only God.** The best manuscripts omit σοφῶ, which seems to have crept in here from Rom. xvi. 26. The exact construction is, "To the eternal King, the Immortal, the Invisible, the only God [or, 'who alone is God'], be honour," etc. **Be honour and glory.** A little varied from St. Paul's usual doxologies (see Rom. xi. 36; xvi. 27; Gal. i. 5; Eph. iii. 21; and ch. vi. 16, where δόξα stands alone, and has the article—Ellicott on Gal. i. 5). In Rom. ii. 10 δόξα and τιμὴ are coupled together, but applied to man. This interposition of a doxology is quite in St. Paul's manner.

Ver. 18.—*My child for son*, A.V.; *by them thou mayest for thou by them mightest*, A.V.; *the good for a good*, A.V. **This charge.** The apostle now picks up the thread which he had dropped at ver. 4, and solemnly commits to Timothy the episcopal care of the Ephesian Church, for which he had bid him stop at Ephesus. Omitting the long digression in vers. 5—17, the sense runs clearly thus: "As I besought thee to tarry at Ephesus in order that thou mightest charge some not to teach a different doctrine, so now do I place this charge in thy hands, according to the prophecies which pointed to thee,

¹ Πιστεῖν αὐτῷ, ἐν αὐτῷ, εἰς αὐτόν, and ἐπ' αὐτόν.

that thou mayest war the good warfare according to the tenor of them." He thus adds that he entrusted this charge to Timothy, not *mero motu*, but according to direct indications of the Holy Ghost, through the prophets of the Church, which pointed out Timothy as the person who was to war that good warfare. The words, *ἵνα στρατεύῃ ἐν αὐταῖς τὴν καλὴν στρατείαν*, might possibly depend upon *τὰς προαγοῦσας ἐπὶ σε*, meaning that those prophecies had this end in pointing to Timothy, viz. that he might war the good warfare, that he might be placed in the difficult post of *στρατηγός*, and the *ἐν αὐταῖς* follows rather more naturally in this case. But it is, perhaps, better to take them as dependent upon *παράθεμαι*. By them (*ἐν αὐταῖς*). Here *ἐν* may be either the *causa efficiens*, indicating that by the influence of these prophecies Timothy would war the good warfare, or be equivalent to *κατὰ*, "according to" (see Schleusner's 'Lexicon').

Ver. 19.—*Thrust from them for put away, A.V.; made shipwreck concerning the faith for concerning faith have made shipwreck, A.V. Thrust from them.* The addition "from them" is meant to give the force of the middle voice as in Acts vii. 39, A.V. The verb *ἀπώθεμαι* occurs Acts vii. 27, 39; Rom. xi. 1, 2. It is a strong expression, implying here the wilful resistance to the voice of conscience. The form *ἀπωθέω, -έομαι* is found, Acts xiii. 46, and frequently in the LXX. Which (*ἥν*) applies to the good conscience only. Hence the important lesson that deviations from the true faith are preceded by violations of the conscience. The surest way to maintain a pure faith is to maintain a good and tender conscience (comp. ch. ii. 9; John vii. 17). The faith. It is by no means certain that *ἡ πίστις* here means "the faith" rather than "faith" (subjec-

tive). Both the grammar and the sense equally admit the rendering "faith," referring to the preceding *πίστις*. (For the phrase, *περὶ τὴν πίστιν*, "with respect to," comp. ch. vi. 4; 2 Tim. ii. 18; Titus ii. 7.)

Ver. 20.—*Delivered for have delivered, A.V.; might be taught for may learn, A.V. Hymenæus*; probably the same as is mentioned 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18, as holding heretical doctrine concerning the resurrection, and overthrowing the faith of some. It is an uncommon name, though borne by a Bishop of Alexandria in the second century, and by a Bishop of Jerusalem in the third. Alexander; doubtless the same as "Alexander the copper-smith" of 2 Tim. iv. 14. I delivered unto Satan. The passages in Scripture which throw light on this difficult phrase are, chiefly, the following: the almost identical passage, 1 Cor. v. 5; Job i. 12; ii. 6, 7; Luke xiii. 16; Acts v. 5, 10; x. 38; xiii. 11; 1 Cor. xi. 30; 2 Cor. xii. 7; and Heb. ii. 14. Putting these together, it appears that sickness and bodily infirmity and death are, within certain limits, in the power of Satan to inflict. And that the apostles were able, on fitting occasions, to hand over peccant members of the Church to this power of Satan, that by such discipline "the spirit might be saved." In the case of Hymenæus and Alexander (as in that of the incestuous person at Corinth), the punishment incident on this delivery to Satan would appear to have been short of death, but in the case of the two first not to have had the effect of bringing them to a true repentance. Might be taught (*παιδεύεσθαι*); viz. by correction and punishment, as children are taught (Heb. xii. 6—8). The metaphor in the word *κολαφίζειν* (2 Cor. xii. 7) is similar.

HOMILETICS.

Vers. 1, 2, 19, 20.—*Church government.* St. Paul was about to commit extensive powers in the Church to Timothy. It was therefore necessary that he should define clearly the source of his own authority. This he does very distinctly. He was an apostle according to the commandment of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence his power to delegate authority to his son Timothy, and hence the duty of the Church to submit to Timothy's ruling. Among the powers committed to Timothy was that of ordaining bishops and deacons by the laying on of hands (ch. iii. and v. 22, compared with 2 Tim. ii. 2), which seems to give us very clearly the doctrine of apostolical succession. For it should be observed that this succession is alone consistent with what St. Paul here writes. If the power to appoint and ordain their ministers had been vested by Christ's ordinance in the congregation, St. Paul would have been violating the rights and liberties of the Church by sending Timothy to do that which really belonged to the Ephesian congregation to do. But the theory that the government of the Church is in the hands of those who have received their commission by succession from the apostles is in exact accord with what St. Paul here writes to Timothy.

Vers. 3—11, 19, 20.—*The heretic.* We have in these verses some of the characteristics of heresy very graphically portrayed. First, there is the teaching of other or different doctrine from that which they had received. The Fathers always lay stress upon novelty as characteristic of heresy, while it was characteristic of the Church to teach the old truths which had been handed down to them by those who went before them. And they are right. "I delivered unto you that which I also received," is the spirit of sound teaching. To invent new doctrines, and to preach things of one's own choosing, is the spirit of heresy. Then, again, it is characteristic of heresy to start curious questions, not with a view to real edification in the faith of Jesus Christ, but for the sake of displaying subtlety in disputing, and keeping up controversy and a war of words, and factious partisanship. The unity of the Church, and loving agreement amongst the brethren, is the last thing that heretics think of. Puffed up with self-importance, desirous of being leaders, despising others, treating with contempt all who will not follow them, they turn the Church into a bear-garden, and substitute vain jangling for the words of truth and soberness. Especially is arrogance combined with ignorance a leading feature in the heretic; and in his method of handling Divine truth he makes a display of both. Another feature may be noted, as set forth in ver. 19, viz. the divorce between conscience and faith. The heretic handles the things of God as matter for mere intellectual contests, apart from reverence and godly fear. He disputes about God and about Christ, and thinks it unimportant whether his own heart is pure or impure. He walks in open disobedience to God's commandments, and yet thinks himself competent to judge of God's nature and attributes. He darkens his own soul by sin, and yet dares to approach the mystery of godliness. Lastly, it is characteristic of the heretic that he rarely, if ever, repents, and returns to the faith which he denied. Hymenæus and Alexander, in spite of the godly discipline ministered to them for their correction, are still found subverting the faith of many, and withstanding the apostle of Jesus Christ, in the latest mention of them. They were in this respect like their brethren in heresy, Simon Magus, Cerinthus, Marcion, Valentinus, Montanus, Manes, Arius, Socinus, and many more. The shipwreck of faith is, for the most part, total and irremediable.

Vers. 12—18.—*The apostle.* The character of the apostle and true minister of the gospel stands out here in striking and glorious contrast with that of the heretic. Called by the grace of God to the ministry of the Word, not self-appointed; enabled by the grace of God, not trusting in his own cleverness; seeking the glory of God and the salvation of souls, not aiming at his own self-exaltation;—the apostle and minister of Christ moves altogether in a different plane from the heretical leader. A humble sense of his own unworthiness, instead of arrogant self-conceit; a lively apprehension of the mercy and love of God to his own soul, instead of a self-sufficient reliance upon his own intellect; a faithful delivery of the truth committed to him, instead of a presumptuous fabrication of new doctrines; and a glowing faith and love, with a growing apprehension of the glory of the central truths of the gospel, instead of a vain reaching after new things, and an itching for exciting fables,—mark off the true servant of Christ from the pretentious heretic by unmistakable distinctions. Well were it for the Church if these characteristics of the true bishop of souls were more distinctly visible in all her ministers. Questions, and strifes of words, and fables, and speculations, which tend to division more than to unity, may be found in the teaching and writing of professing Churchmen, as well as in those of avowed heretics. Let "the faithful saying" hold its supreme place in the heart and in the teaching of the Church's ministers, and the unity as well as the holiness of the Church will be proportionately increased. Its strength to resist heresy will be increased in the same degree.

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Vers. 1, 2.—*Apostolic address and greeting.* As this Epistle was designed to bear an official character, it was necessary that its address should set forth the authority under which the apostle gave his instructions concerning Church order and Christian work.

I. THE APOSTLE'S AUTHORITY. "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ according to the commandment of God our Saviour, and Christ Jesus, who is our Hope." The apostleship was his, not merely because he was called to it (Rom. i. 1), or destined to it by the will of God (1 Cor. i. 1), but according to express Divine commandment. 1. *It was the commandment of God our Saviour*, evidently in allusion to the command of the Spirit at Antioch, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have appointed them" (Acts xiii. 2), but more distinctly to his earlier call (Acts xxvi. 16), as "a vessel of election" (Acts ix. 15), to preach the Gospel to Jews and Gentiles. As the things of the Father are the Son's, so the things of the Son are the Spirit's. Thus God—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—gave him his original appointment. Thus the salvation would be seen to be of God's purpose and agency; for he is "God our Saviour." 2. *It was also the commandment of Christ Jesus, our Hope.* Therefore his ordinary title is "an apostle of Jesus Christ." The aged apostle, in the near prospect of death, dwells on the thought of Christ as his one blessed hope. He is our Hope (1) as its Author; (2) as its Object; (3) as its Revealer; (4) as its Procurer; (5) but, above all, as its Substance and Foundation. He is our very "Hope of glory" (Col. i. 27).

II. THE APOSTLE'S GREETING. "To Timothy, my true child in the faith." 1. *His early life.* Timothy was a native of Lycaonia in Asia Minor, probably of Lystra, one of its towns. His father was a pagan, his mother a pious Jewess, named Eunice, who trained him early in the principles of true religion. It is an interesting fact that the apostle's more intimate companions were Gentiles, or with Gentile blood in their veins—Timothy, Titus, Luke, and even Demas. 2. *His relationship to the Apostle Paul.* (1) He was converted by the apostle. (2) He was associated with the apostle during a longer range of time than any other disciple. (3) He was an interesting disciple of the Lord. (a) There was great personal affection between Timothy and Paul. (b) There was "no one like minded" with Timothy who could be brought to take care of individual Churches. (c) Timothy was a constant organ of personal communication between the apostle and individual Churches. (d) He seems to have been of a soft and, perhaps, timid temperament. (e) He was very abstemious in his habits (ch. v. 23). 3. *The salutation.* "Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord." (1) The blessings invoked upon Timothy. (a) Grace—a fresh discovery of Divine favour, an increase of grace, a fuller enjoyment of the gifts of the Spirit. (b) Mercy—a fresh application of the pardoning mercy of God in Christ. It occurs only here and in the Second Epistle to Timothy—suggested, perhaps, by the nearness of his own death, and the increasing difficulties of his last days; for he hopes that Timothy may share in the mercy he has sought for himself. (c) Peace—peace of conscience through the blood of Christ, so necessary "to keep heart and mind" in the midst of the perturbations and distractions of his service at Ephesus. (2) The Source of these blessings. They spring alike from the Father and the Son—a proof of the coequal Godhead of the Son: for they are strictly Divine gifts.—T. C.

Vers. 3, 4.—*The object of Timothy's continued sojourn at Ephesus.* **I. CONSIDER THE TENDER CARE WHICH THE APOSTLE TAKES OF THE EPHESIAN CHURCH.** "As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I was going into Macedonia, so do I beseech thee now that thou charge some that they teach no other doctrine." As Timothy was with the apostle in his first journey through Macedonia (Acts xvi. 3, 12; xx. 3, 4), this must refer to a later journey, occurring after the first imprisonment at Rome. 1. *Mark the affectionate style of his address*—"I besought thee;" whereas to Titus he said, "I gave thee command" (Titus i. 5). Timothy received no authoritative injunction, but merely a tender request that he would prolong his stay so as to check the waywardness of false teachers who had risen to mar the simplicity of the gospel. 2. *Mark the tendency of the purest Churches to be spoiled by false doctrine.* The apostle had foretold the rise of a separatist party when he was addressing the elders of Ephesus at Miletus (Acts xx. 29, 30). They may have been few—"some;" but if they were like "the grievous wolves" of the prediction, they might succeed in "drawing away disciples after them, speaking perverse things."

II. THE CHARGE WHICH THE APOSTLE GIVES TO BE ADDRESSED TO THE FALSE TEACHERS. 1. *It was a charge that they should teach no doctrine different from the gospel.* "That they teach no other doctrine." (1) This implied that the apostle's doctrine was the true

standard of teaching by which all other teaching was to be judged. (2) There may have been no doctrinal heresy at Ephesus; but the teaching, being of a morbid, unedifying, speculative character, would tend to reduce the warmth of "the first love" of Ephesian saints, if not to lead to serious departures from the faith. (3) Ministers must take special care that no false doctrines be broached in the Church of God. 2. *It was a charge that the errorists should give no heed to fables and genealogies.* (1) Fables. Evidently rabbinical fables and fabrications in the regions of history and doctrine. The Talmud is full of them. (2) Endless genealogies. The genealogies of the Pentateuch were actually made the foundation of allegorical interpretations by Jews like Philo, who largely influenced their countrymen. There may have been a disposition likewise, on the part of Jews, to establish their genealogical connection with Abraham, as if the bond of a physical relationship could add strength to that firmer bond which allies all to Abraham, whether they are Jews or Gentiles, who believe in Christ (Gal. iii. 29). 3. *Consider the ground upon which the apostle condemns this injurious teaching.* "Inasmuch as they minister questions, rather than the dispensation of God which is in faith." (1) The teaching was unprofitably disputatious. It ministered questions not easily answered, and which, if answered, had no practical bearing upon Christian life. (2) It did not tend to promote the scheme of salvation as set forth by the apostles—"the dispensation of God which is in faith." (a) God's dispensation is simply his method of salvation, as unfolded in the gospel (Eph. i. 10), with which the Apostle Paul was specially entrusted (1 Cor. iv. 1). (b) This dispensation has its principle in faith; unlike the fables and genealogies, which might exercise the mind or the imagination, but not the heart. Faith is the sphere of action upon which the dispensation turns. (3) The apostle's anxiety to check this false teaching at Ephesus had evidently two grounds. (a) This rabbinical teaching, if allowed to enter into the training of Gentile congregations, would cause Christianity to shrink into the narrow limits of a mere Jewish sect. Judaism might thus become the grave of Christianity. (b) It would despiritualize the Christian Church, and rob it of its "first love," and prepare the way to bitter apostasy.—T. C.

Vers. 5—7.—*Nature of the charge connected with the fulfilment of God's dispensation.* In resisting these false teachers, Timothy must remember the true scope and design of the practical teaching which sets forth the scheme of Divine salvation for man.

I. THE END OF THIS TEACHING IS LOVE. 1. *The teaching, as opposed to "fables and genealogies," is of the nature of a solemn charge or practical exhortation.* It is not (1) the Mosaic Law, nor (2) the evangelical law, but (3) sound doctrine in its preceptive, and therefore practical form. 2. *The end or aim of it is love.* "The end of the charge is love." It is love to men, not to God; for the charge stands in contrast with "the questionings which minister strifes" (2 Tim. ii. 23). Practical religious teaching has a tendency to unite men in love. (1) It is hard to maintain brotherly love in presence of active differences of doctrine. (2) It is impossible to edify without love; for "love edifieth" (1 Cor. viii. 1), as speculations and contentions cannot.

II. THE NATURE OF THE LOVE WHICH IS RELATED TO THIS GOSPEL CHARGE. It is "love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." This is the threefold foundation on which it rests. 1. *It springs out of a pure heart as its inward seat.* (1) Such a heart is purified by faith (Acts xv. 9). (2) Sprinkled from an evil conscience by the blood of Christ. (3) Directed into the love of God (2 Thess. iii. 5). (4) Inclined to God's testimonies (Ps. cxix. 36). (5) Therefore it is a heart pure from selfish desires, ignoble aims, and sinister policy. The love springing from such a heart must be "without dissimulation;" for it is loving with a pure heart fervently. 2. *It springs from a good conscience.* (1) Such a conscience is made good by the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, which reconciles us to God. Thus we have the answer of a good conscience before God. (2) It is purged from dead works to serve the living God. (3) Therefore a man is enabled to keep a conscience void of offence toward God and man; to be true to his convictions of truth and duty, and to respond faithfully to every moral obligation. Love springing from such a source will have its actings wisely determined. 3. *It springs from faith unfeigned.* (1) This is its true origin; for "faith worketh by love," and must therefore be in existence before love. (2) It gives reality

and power to love, because it is itself not the pretence of faith, but faith in real existence and power. There was thus a marked contrast with the life of the false teachers—corrupted in mind (ch. vi. 5), seared in conscience (ch. iv. 2), and “reprobate concerning the faith” (2 Tim. iii. 8). 4. *Mark the order of grace here followed.* In the order of nature, faith must be placed first. The apostle follows the order of practical working. Furthest down in man’s inner nature is the deep well of a purified heart; then the love, as it comes forth into exercise, must be arrested on its way by a good conscience, to receive restraint and regulation; then, to sustain the vigour of love in its continuous exercise, there must be faith unfeigned, grasping the promises of God, and in intimate relation to things not seen.

III. THE EVIL EFFECTS OF SWERVING FROM THIS THREEFOLD FOUNDATION OF LOVE. “From which things some having swerved have turned aside to vain talking.” 1. *The persons referred to had evidently belonged, if they did not still belong to, the Church at Ephesus.* Timothy could not otherwise have exercised authority over them. 2. *The swerve was moral in its nature,* but it would have intellectual effects of an injurious character. How often does the heart determine the bias of the mind! 3. *Its actual result was a persistent habit of vain talking.* It was empty babbling, without sense or profit—about mere trifles, to the neglect of weightier matters of doctrine.

IV. THE PRESUMPTUOUS IGNORANCE OF THIS PARTY. “Desiring to be teachers of the Law, not understanding either what they say, or concerning what things they confidently affirm.” 1. *It is no new fact in life to find the least qualified the most ready to undertake the task of instruction.* They were ignorant and unlearned men, who were only able to wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction. 2. *Their ignorance was of the most unquestionable character;* for they neither understood their own averments or arguments, as to their nature and drift, nor did they comprehend the things concerning which they were so ready to give their foolish but deliberate judgment. (1) It is evident they did not reject and disparage the Mosaic Law, but rather exalted it by their interpretations. (2) They were not mere Judaists such as the apostle contended with in Galatia and elsewhere; for they are not charged with any attempt, either to maintain the ancient customs or to bring in legal observances out of their proper place. (3) They rather, as misunderstanding the true nature and design of the Law, tried to work up a compost of Judaic and Gnostic elements, which explained the Law according to the philosophic views of the East. Therefore their theology was marred by fanciful allegorizings of the Law, which eliminated its moral element, and thus robbed it of all power to touch the heart or conscience of men. (4) The case in hand illustrates the progress of error in the Church. The incipient Gnosticism of Ephesus gradually developed into the more pronounced Gnosticism so pointedly condemned by the Apostle John in his First Epistle.—T. C.

Vers. 8, 9.—*The nature and design of the Law.* “We know that the Law is good, if a man use it lawfully.” This passage contains the last recorded utterance of the apostle concerning the Law, and of which he speaks with all the conscious authority of an apostle. He asserts the goodness of the Law—the moral Law, not the ceremonial, which was now disannulled, for the context refers expressly to the precepts of the Decalogue—and this goodness is manifest if you keep in view the moral end for which it was given. Perhaps the apostle may have had in view the lax moral practice of the errorists at Ephesus.

I. THE LAWFUL USE OF THE LAW. Scripture sets forth its design in plain language. 1. *It was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.* (Gal. iii. 24.) Thus “Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness” (Rom. x. 4). 2. *But it only brings us to Christ as it reveals to us our imperfections and our sins.* “For by the Law is the knowledge of sin” (Rom. iii. 20). It was, indeed, “added because of transgressions” (Gal. iii. 19). The Law shows us our sinfulness, and drives us to the Saviour. It thus “shuts us up to faith” (Gal. iii. 23).

II. THE UNLAWFUL USE OF THE LAW. 1. *To make it the occasion of endless logomachies—of vain talking, of “strivings about the Law.”* 2. *To seek justification by obedience to its precepts.* 3. *To strive for the attainment of holiness by a use of the Law, interpreted, not in its plain sense, but with meanings imposed upon it by mystical allegorizings and theosophic culture.* The errorists at Ephesus were no

Pharisaic legalists or mere Judaists, but persons ignorant of the true nature and design of the Law; who abstained from things lawful and good, and were yet morally corrupt (Titus i. 10; Rev. ii. 9, 14, 20, 24).

III. GROUND OF THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN ITS LAWFUL AND UNLAWFUL USE.

"Knowing this, that the Law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless." 1. *The Law is not made for a righteous man.* (1) This does not mean that a righteous man—that is, a man right with God, whose experience has made the principles of righteousness habitual with him—has no relation whatever to the Law. (a) Because the Law had relation to (α) Adam in innocence, who had the Law written in his heart; (β) to Abraham, who was a righteous man; (γ) to David, who was a righteous man; (δ) and to all the Old Testament saints; (ε) it had even relation to Jesus Christ himself, who was "made under the Law"—the very "Law that was in his heart" (Ps. xl. 8), of which he was "the end for righteousness" (Rom. x. 4), because he came to fulfil it (Matt. v. 16). (b) Because the Law has relation to believers under the Christian dispensation; for this very apostle enforces the obligation to obey it, specifying six of its enactments (Rom. xiii. 8, 9; Eph. vi. 1). James says that believers who show respect of persons become "transgressors of the Law." Therefore, when the apostle says "the Law is not made for a righteous man," he does not mean that the righteous man is no longer bound to obey it. He delights in it; he actually serves it (Rom. vii. 25). If any should say that the apostle means that the righteous do not need the Law to direct them, we answer that they might as well say they do not need the Scripture to direct them, as the Law is already in their hearts. How is a righteous man to know sin but by the Law? "For by the Law is the knowledge of sin." (2) His statement has an abstract cast, like our Lord's saying, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." (a) The Law was not made because of righteous, but because of wicked, men. "It was added because of transgressions." It is similar to the statement of the apostle concerning the nine graces of the Spirit—"against such there is no Law" (Gal. v. 23). The Law does not, cannot condemn, any one of these graces. (b) The Law was never made for the righteous man in the sense in which it was made for the unrighteous man, to condemn him; for the righteous man is redeemed from the curse of the Law (Gal. iii. 13). Its penalty cannot affect him; its burden does not weigh him down; its terrors do not bring him into bondage. On the contrary, he delights in it as he serves it. Thus, while in one sense the righteous man delights in it and serves it, he is in another sense "not under the Law, but under grace" (Rom. vi. 14). It may be further observed that if Adam had continued in his original righteousness, the Law of Sinai would never have been given to man. "It was added because of transgressions." 2. *The Law is made for the wicked.* They are described according to the two tables of the Decalogue. Those in the first table go in pairs. (1) The lawless and unruly. These terms describe opposition to the Law—the one in its more subjective, the other in its more objective side; the one representing, perhaps, a more passive, the other a more active hostility to Law. (2) The ungodly and sinful. These terms describe the opposition to God—the one without reverence for him, the other living in defiance of him. (3) The unholy and profane. These terms describe the manifestation of the wicked and godless spirit toward the Name or ordinances of God. They touch upon the violation of the first four commandments. (4) Those in the second table begin with (a) sins against the fifth commandment: "smitters of fathers and smitters of mothers;" (b) sins against the sixth: "man-slayers;" (c) sins against the seventh: "fornicators, sodomites;" (d) sins against the eighth: "men-stealers"—this special form of transgression being selected because the theft of a man himself is a far more serious offence than the theft of his goods; (e) sins against the ninth: "for liars, for perjurers"—the one being a great advance in enormity upon the other. (f) Strange that the apostle does not enumerate the tenth, which operated upon himself so powerfully (Rom. vii. 7). Perhaps it was designed by the inclusive reference no longer to the committers of sin, but to the sins themselves: "And if there be any other thing that is contrary to the sound instruction, according to the gospel of the glory of God which was committed to my trust." This language implies (1) that the list is not designed to be exhaustive of the various forms of evil in the world; (2) that the Law and the gospel are in perfect harmony respecting what is sin; (3) that the design of the gospel is to set forth the glory of God's mercy, goodness and love; (4) that the gospel is a precious deposit committed to human hands,

to be dispensed for the benefit of the race of man. The apostle did not shrink from such a solemn trust, but rather rejoiced in it.—T. C.

Vers. 12, 13.—*Ejaculation of thankfulness for this high trust.* Though he appears to turn aside for a moment from the false teachers, he is still carrying out his design to inspire Timothy with a proper view of the true nature and importance of the gospel.

I. THE SUBJECT-MATTER OF HIS THANKSGIVING. "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, that enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, appointing me to the ministry." 1. *The Lord gave him strength for his work.* "He enabled me." He gave him all his intellectual abilities, all his capacity for winning men to the truth, all his firmness, endurance, and patience in preaching the gospel. 2. *The Lord gave him his appointment to the ministry.* (1) The apostle did not thrust himself into it, nor take this honour to himself, neither was he called unto it by men. (2) It was the Lord himself who made a minister of him; for the apostle speaks of "the ministry which I received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts xx. 24). The ministry here signifies the more humble service, rather than the apostleship; for he refers rather to the work to be done than to the prerogatives of his office. (3) The Lord counted him faithful for the work; not that the faithfulness was a foreseen quality which became the ground of his call to office, but that he counted him faithful because he made him so, for he speaks of himself as "one who hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful" (1 Cor. vii. 25). Faithfulness must be the pre-eminent quality of the steward of God (1 Cor. iv. 2).

II. HIS THANKSGIVING IS GREATLY ENHANCED BY THE THOUGHT OF HIS DEEP UNWORTHINESS. "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and a doer of outrage." These are words of bitter self-accusation. 1. *He had been a blasphemer.* He spoke evil himself of the Name of Jesus, and compelled others to follow his example (Acts xxvi. 11). This was the highest sin that could be committed against God. 2. *He had been a persecutor.* "I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women" (Acts xxii. 4). He "breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord" (Acts ix. 1). He not only spoke evil of Christ, but persecuted Christ in his members. 3. *He had been a doer of outrage.* Not content merely with reproachful words, he broke out into deeds of violence. His conduct was contumelious and injurious in the last degree.—T. C.

Ver. 13.—*The Lord's mercy contrasted with his own want of it.* Great as his sin had been, he became a subject of Divine mercy.

I. THE LORD'S MERCY TO HIM. "I obtained mercy." 1. *The mercy included the pardon of his great wickedness.* It was mercy unsought for as well as unmerited. 2. *It was mercy with the grace of apostleship added to it.*

II. THE GROUND AND REASON OF THIS MERCY. "Because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." 1. *The true ground of mercy is nothing whatever in man, but the compassion of God himself* (Titus iii. 5). 2. *The apostle does not signify that he had any claim to God's mercy,* for he calls himself in the next verse "the very chief of sinners." 3. *He does not mean to lessen the enormity of his guilt,* but sets it forth, in all its attending circumstances, as not being such as excluded him from the pale of mercy, because he had not sinned against his own convictions. (1) He did it ignorantly; but ignorance was no excuse where there were the means of knowledge; and unbelief, out of which the ignorance springs, could not be accepted as an excuse, since he had heard the statement of Stephen. Besides, all sins spring from ignorance, and are aggravated by unbelief. (2) But he did not sin wilfully against light and conscience, and so commit the sin against the Holy Ghost. (3) He who has compassion on the ignorant had compassion upon him, when he found him an ignorant and blinded zealot. Thus were confirmed the words of Christ, that every sin against the Son of man will be forgiven, so long as there is no blasphemy against the Spirit (Matt. xii. 31). The apostle had not deliberately set at nought the counsel of God, but stood on exactly the same ground with those sinners converted at Pentecost, who had acted "in ignorance" (Acts iii. 17). The sin was great in both cases, but it was not unpardonable. (4) There is nothing in the apostle's statement to justify the opinion that those who have never heard of Christ will be forgiven on account of their ignorance. Our Lord's words warrant the expectation that

there will be a mitigation, but not a remission, of punishment in such cases. "He that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes" (Luke xii. 48). The language in both passages justifies charitable judgments even respecting persecutors.—T. C.

Ver. 14.—*The superabounding grace of the Lord to the apostle.* He now explains how fully he received of God's mercy in spite of his unbelief.

I. THE MERCY OF THE LORD OVERFLOWED IN GRACE ON GOD'S SIDE. "But the grace of our Lord superabounded." His salvation was of free grace. He had done nothing to deserve it, but rather everything to forfeit his claim upon it. It was grace first that made him a Christian, and then made him an apostle.

II. THE MERCY OF THE LORD OVERFLOWED IN FAITH AND LOVE ON MAN'S SIDE. "With faith and love that are in Christ Jesus." 1. *These two graces are the fruits of grace.* When grace abounds, they will necessarily abound. 2. *Faith stands in opposition to his old unbelief.* It is that grace which receives every blessing from Christ, and gives him all the glory, bringing peace, joy, and comfort into the heart, and ending in eternal life. 3. *Love stands in opposition to his former rage and cruelty.* He now has love to God and man. 4. *His faith and love find their true spring in Jesus Christ,* as in him all fullness dwells.—T. C.

Ver. 15.—*The summary of the gospel.* This statement is grounded on his own experience of God's saving mercy.

I. THE TRUTH AND CERTAINTY OF THE GOSPEL REVELATION. "Faithful is the Word, and worthy of all acceptance." Five times does this phrase occur in the pastoral Epistles. It was a sort of formula or watchword of the early Christian Churches. 1. *The doctrine of salvation is entitled to all credit.* It is certain that Christ came to save sinners. 2. *It is to be received by all sorts of people, with heartiness and gladness, as a doctrine suitable to the necessities of all men.* With what zeal it ought, therefore, to be set before men!

II. THE SUBSTANCE OF THE GOSPEL REVELATION. "That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." 1. *This language implies Christ's pre-existence.* He left the glory which he had with the Father before the world was (John xvi. 28). 2. *It implies that he came voluntarily of his own free will.* It is true that God's love is manifest in the sending of Jesus, but Christ's love is equally manifest in his advent. It was necessary that he should come into the world, because he could not otherwise suffer and die in our stead. The fact that he came as man in the fulness of time implies that the mere forth-putting of spiritual power from heaven did not suffice. A man's work had to be done that God's mercy might reach us. 3. *It suggests the true design of his coming.* "To save sinners." (1) This implies the revelation of God's will to man. (2) The impetration of salvation through Christ's suffering and obedience. (3) The application of the salvation to the objects of it. (4) That sinners need salvation, and are lost without it. (5) That the greatest sinners have no right to despair of salvation—"of whom I am chief." (a) The apostle speaks of himself in the present tense, not in the past, for he still feels himself to be but a believing sinner. (b) The language recalls his frequent allusions to his persecutions of the Church of God. God had forgiven him, but he could never forgive himself. He places himself in the very front rank of transgressors because of his share in the devastation of the Church. (c) The language implies his deep humility. It was an element in his spiritual greatness that he had such a sense of his own sin. He calls himself elsewhere "less than the least of all saints" (Eph. iii. 8). (d) It is well to be mindful of our sin in a way of godly sorrow, as a means of keeping us humble and thankful for the rich grace of the gospel dispensed to us.—T. C.

Vers. 16, 17.—*The apostle an example of the Divine long-suffering to all ages.* There was an economical purpose in the salvation of the Apostle Paul.

I. THE EXERCISE OF THE LORD'S LONG-SUFFERING TOWARD THE APOSTLE. "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy." 1. *The mercy takes the form of long-suffering;* for the Lord bore long with the ways of this fierce persecutor of the saints, when he might have cut his career short in judgment. 2. *It took the form of positive deliverance*

from guilt and sin and death. How often "the long-suffering of the Lord is to usward salvation" (2 Pet. iii. 9)!

II. THE DESIGN OF THIS REMARKABLE EXHIBITION OF MERCY. "That in me as the chief Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them who should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting." 1. *The long-suffering is exercised by the Lord himself.* It is he who is wounded in the persecutions of his members. "Saul, Saul! why persecutest thou me?" Yet it is he who shows mercy. 2. *The greatest persecutors may not despair of mercy.* The Lord will tarry long with them if peradventure they may repent and turn to him. 3. *The case of Paul—"the chief of sinners"—ought to encourage sinners of every class and sort to exercise hope and trust in the Lord,* as well as to meet the misgivings of those who think they have sinned too much to warrant the expectation that the Lord will have mercy upon them. 4. *Trust in Jesus Christ necessarily brings with it eternal life.* There is nothing needed but faith for this purpose. "He that hath the Son hath life."

III. ASCRIPTION OF PRAISE AND THANKFULNESS TO GOD FOR HIS MERCY. 1. *Consider the titles by which God is addressed.* "Now to the King of the ages, incorruptible, invisible, the only God." (1) He is King of the ages, as his kingdom is called the kingdom of all the ages (Ps. cxlv. 13); because as God, knowing the end from the beginning, he fixes the periods or stages of the development through which this world is destined to pass, shaping all events according to his pleasure, and making all things work together for good to them that love him. (2) Incorruptible; because "he only hath immortality" (ch. vi. 16). (3) Invisible; for no man hath seen him at any time, as he dwells in light inaccessible. (4) The only God; in opposition to the false gods of the heathen, or to the multitudes of angels and principalities and powers. 2. *Consider the doxology.* "Unto him be honour and glory for ever and ever." (1) They already belong to him alone. (2) They will belong to him to all eternity. (3) The thought of the overruling wisdom and mercy and goodness of God in his case leads to this devout acknowledgment.—T. C.

Vers. 18—20.—*The solemn charge to Timothy.* The apostle here returns to the duty of directing Timothy.

I. IT IS NECESSARY FOR EVEN GOOD MINISTERS TO BE REMINDED OF THEIR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES. "This charge I commit to thee, my son Timothy." 1. *The charge may have indirectly alluded to the commands already given, but refers immediately to the good warfare in which he is to war as the fulfilment of his calling.* 2. *It is committed to him like a precious deposit to be guarded and kept.* How anxious the apostle is that Timothy should be faithful to his position and his responsibilities!

II. IT IS A SOLEMN THING TO INVOKE THE MEMORY OF PROPHECIES OR PIOUS ANTICIPATIONS IN AID OF A DIFFICULT CAREER. "According to the prophecies that went before on thee, that by them thou mightest war a good warfare." 1. *The allusion is to prophecies uttered probably at his ordination by the prophets of the Church, foretelling his future zeal and success.* Such prophetic intimations were not uncommon in the primitive Church. We trace them at Jerusalem (Acts xi. 27, 28), at Antioch (Acts xiii. 1), at Corinth (1 Cor. xiv.), at Cæsarea (Acts xxi. 8—10). 2. *Such prophecies would act with a stimulating, self-protective power upon a temperament like that of Timothy, inclined, perhaps, to softness and timidity.* They would encourage him in the midst of his present perils and trials at Ephesus. 3. *It is a serious thing to disappoint the hopes of the pious.*

III. THE PURPOSE CONTEMPLATED BY THE COMMAND AS WELL AS ITS IMMEDIATE SUBJECT. "That by them"—that is, in virtue of them—"thou mightest war a good warfare." The figure is a familiar one with the apostle (Eph. vi. 12; 2 Cor. x. 3, 4; 2 Tim. ii. 3). 1. *Christian life, and above all that of a minister, is a good warfare.* (1) It is good because it is against evil—the world, the flesh, and the devil; (2) because it is directed toward the good of men; (3) because it is for a good end, the glory of God. 2. *It is to be carried on* (1) under Christ as Captain (Heb. ii. 10); (2) with watchfulness and sobriety (1 Cor. xvi. 13; 1 Thess. v. 6); (3) with an enduring hardness (2 Tim. ii. 3, 10); (4) with self-denial (1 Cor. ix. 25—27); (5) with prayer (Eph. vi. 18).

IV. THE WEAPONS IN THIS WARFARE ARE FAITH AND A GOOD CONSCIENCE. "Holding fast a good conscience." The two must go together, but faith must necessarily

go first. You cannot have a good conscience without faith, nor faith in its reality without a good conscience. There must be faith in your teaching, conscience in your actions. 1. *Faith*. There is "the shield of faith." It is not the mere doctrine of faith, but the grace of faith. It is by this faith we overcome (1) the world (1 John v. 4, 5); (2) the flesh (Gal. v. 24); (3) the devil (1 John ii. 14); (4) everything that exalts itself (2 Cor. x. 5); (5) death and the grave (1 Cor. xv. 54, 55). A mere intellectual belief could not produce such results; for "the devils believe and tremble." 2. *A good conscience*. (1) It is good because it is sprinkled with the blood of Christ (Heb. ix. 14). (2) Because it helps to keep the faith in purity (1 Tim. iii. 9). (3) Christians ought to seek the approval of their consciences in all things (Acts xxiv. 16). (4) Its testimony ought to be a source of joy (2 Cor. i. 12; 1 John iii. 21). (5) Ministers ought always to commend themselves to the consciences of their people (2 Cor. iv. 2).

V. THE WOEFUL SHIPWRECK OF CONSCIENCE. "Which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck." The figure is a nautical one. When the cargo or ballast of a good conscience is tossed overboard, the ship becomes unmanageable, and is easily shipwrecked. "Some" at Ephesus resolutely stifled the admonitions of conscience, and thus turned faith into a mere matter of speculation, with no influence whatever upon their practice. 1. *These persons made shipwreck of the doctrine of faith*; for they held that the resurrection is past already (2 Tim. ii. 18). 2. *If they made shipwreck of the grace of faith, it may not have been a total shipwreck*; for the discipline imposed upon them by the apostle was for the saving of the spirit, "not for the destruction of the flesh" (2 Cor. v. 5). 3. *The apostle's method of dealing with these offenders*. "Of whom are Hymenæus and Alexander; whom I delivered unto Satan, that they may be taught not to blaspheme." (1) Hymenæus was almost certainly the same as the impugner of a future resurrection (2 Tim. ii. 17); and Alexander was probably, but not so certainly, the same as Alexander the coppersmith (2 Tim. iv. 14), who was a resolute personal enemy of the apostle. (2) The apostle delivered them unto Satan, which seems to have included (a) a solemn excommunication from the Church, carried out no doubt by the Church at the apostle's command; and (b) the infliction of bodily disease. Cases of the exercise of this terrible apostolic power are those of Ananias and Sapphira, Elymas, and the incestuous person at Corinth. (3) It was not an irrevocable sentence, for its remission depended upon the return of the offenders to faith and repentance. "That they may be taught through chastisement not to blaspheme." The design was the recovery of the offenders; but neither this Epistle nor the next throws any light upon the ultimate effect of the severe discipline inflicted by the apostle.—T. C.

Vers. 1, 2.—*The Divine benediction*. "Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord." This is a trinity of blessing. The gospel is to be preached as a new life. This contrasts with *vain jangling* in the sixth verse. Some had *swerved*, or literally turned aside, as an arrow that misses the mark. Paul speaks of "questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith." And there are questions mysterious, questions curious, which unregenerated hearts may discuss to the hindrance of true religion. This salutation of the young apostle begins, therefore, with a high spiritual tone: "Grace, mercy, peace."

I. WHO THE GIFTS WERE FROM. "God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord." But in the first verse Paul speaks of God as *our Saviour*. Notice this; it is peculiar, and may keep us from confining ideas of pity and tenderness to Christ alone. God is the Author of salvation. *He sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world*. Here, then, we come to the Fountain-head of the river of grace. Paul cannot give grace, mercy, and peace; they are from "God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord." Paul was the ambassador of the gospel, not the author of it; a preacher, not a priest. The priest never dies, because proud human nature never dies. Men like to say, "through us." In after years, when Paul was dead, there might have come some temptation to Timothy to say, "I derived my apostolate from, I stood next to, him." But a salutation is not a consecration.

II. WHAT ARE THE GIFTS THEMSELVES? Emphatically Christian gifts. The *Roman* motto would have been, "Courage, skill, force." The *Athenian* motto would have been, "Pleasure, beauty, philosophy." 1. *Grace*. God's favour. The beautiful Divine nature revealing itself on the cross as forgiveness, and in a life of tenderness, pity, and holiness to

which the Christian is to be conformed. Grace forgives and grace renews. It is a large word. It carries at its heart all that we mean by moral loveliness and gracefulness. It is the fulfilment of the ancient prayer, "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." 2. *Mercy*. What a picture of cruelty we see in the Roman age, with its amphitheatres, its gladiators, its horrors on a Roman holiday, and its slave quarters! No hospitals for the sick, no asylums for the poor and needy. "Mercy." The cross meant mercy. The parables meant mercy. The prayer was fulfilled, "Lord, show us the Father." 3. *Peace*. The Jews had their disputations about eatings and drinkings and genealogies. Their Church was alive, only with vigorous disputation. The gospel meant true peace—peace, not of condition, but of conscience. Ever must it be so. Peace with God! Peace with our brethren! Peace within ourselves! So the Saviour's legacy was realized: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you."—W. M. S.

Ver. 5.—*The vital end of religion*. "Now the end of the commandment is charity." When we know the Divine end or purpose, we get light on all that leads to that end. Charity, or love that is like God's own love, is the end of all. Religious principle in its root and stem is to blossom into the beauty of Christ-like character. Christianity is a *truth*, that it may be a *life*. It is not to be mere doctrine, or mere ritual. We may be fiery disputants without being faithful soldiers. We may even be workers in the vineyard, without the faith which worketh by love. Ecclesiasticism is not necessarily religion. There may be Church uniformity, Church harmony, and æsthetic ceremonial, and yet, so far as Divine life is concerned, there may be "no breath at all in the midst of it." Let us confine ourselves to the first word.

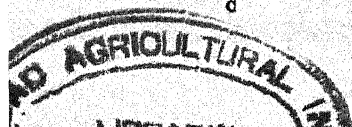
I. CHARITY IS HIGHER THAN UNIFORMITY. With Constantine Christianity meant uniformity, with Hildebrand it meant supremacy. But in its spirituality and simplicity the gospel remains the same in all ages. We are to live Christ; and to live Christ is to live in love, as Christ also loved us, and gave himself for us. Ecclesiasticism is often a system of severe outward drill, an obedience to outward rite and cult. So the Romish Church in Spain, centuries ago, forcibly converted the Moors by dashing holy water in their faces, and so admitted them into the communion of the Church. The gospel cannot be spread by a rough-and-ready "multitudinism" like that. It must begin in personal faith, and work in the spirit of love.

II. CHARITY FINDS ITS IMAGE IN GOD. We need not ask what this love is. For we have seen it incarnated in the words and deeds of the Christ, and in his sufferings for "our sakes" upon the cross. 1. It is not the selfish love which gives affection where it receives affection, and turns even a gift into barter and exchange. 2. It is not the costless love which will be an almoner of bounty where there is no personal self-denial and suffering; but it gives itself. 3. It is not the love of a passing mood, which ministers in affectionate ways in times of high-wrought emotion; but a love which is full of forbearance with our faults, and is triumphant over our faithlessness. So the end of the commandment is worthy of the God who gives the commandment. Like himself, it is charity. And we have reached the highest vision-point in Revelation, when we see in its sublime teachings, not mere commandments which may be arbitrary, but an unfolding of the nature of God.—W. M. S.

Ver. 5.—*Life's inner springs*. "Out of a pure heart." This is the soil in which the heavenly grace grows, and this soil is essential to the purity and beauty of the grace. It is not enough to plant the seed; we must till and nourish the soil.

I. THE HEART IS THE TESTING-PLACE OF WHAT WE LIKE. Here I would give emphasis to the fact that "the good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things." There must be passion in all true life. As Mr. Ruskin truly says, "The entire object of true education is to make people not merely *do* the right things, but *enjoy* the right things; not merely industrious, but to love industry; not merely learned, but to love learning; not merely pure, but to love purity; not merely just, but to hunger and thirst after righteousness. Taste is not only a part and index of morality; it is the only morality. The first and last and closest trial-question to any living creature is—What do you like? Tell me what you like, and I'll tell you what you are." Exactly! So says the gospel. "Out of the heart are the issues of life;" "As a man

I. TIMOTHY.



thinketh in his heart, so is he." This is a true teaching, and may open up a new view of moral and spiritual life to the thoughtful mind.

II. THE HEART IS THE REVEALING PART OF THE TRUE MAN. You must watch life in its temper and spirit at all times and in all places. You may be deceived by good actions. Men may build almshouses and yet live so as to break hearts; they may be courageous in confronting tyrannies abroad, and yet live impure lives in the indulgence of besetting sins. Think of this. Good actions do not make a good man; it is the good man that makes the good actions. A man may be beneficent and give thousands to hospitals, or brave and rescue drowning men from death, or patriotic and save a nation in perilous times, and yet he may not have the mind of Christ, and his heart may be unrenewed. "A pure heart." We all love pure things—the white marble, the rain-washed sky, the peerless alabaster, the silver wings of the dove. So Christ would have us all desire and seek the pure heart.—W. M. S.

Ver. 5.—*The sense of rectitude.* "And of a good conscience." We here come to the ethical region of rectitude, showing us how complete the gospel is, and how it stands related to the whole of our complex nature. We notice here the connection of "good" with conscience; let us see what it means. May there be another conscience that is not good?

I. THERE MAY BE THE CASUIST'S CONSCIENCE. We see this in the case of the scribes and Pharisees in the time of our Lord. The simple instincts of justice and mercy were perverted by ecclesiastical routine, and the *minutiae* of legal ordinations. They overlaid the Law, which appealed to the native instincts of conscience, by their traditions, which did *not* so appeal, and which were burdensome and troublesome. So in Luther's time the consciences of men were in the keeping of the priests, and an artificial and Jesuitical morality made even immorality sometimes expedient and lawful. Men lost the native instincts of right and wrong in obedience to an artificial and ecclesiastical code of morals; they worried themselves about sins that were no sins, and they lost the consciousness that men may be sinners even when they are obedient sons of the Church.

II. THERE MAY BE THE WORLDLY CONSCIENCE. This makes custom into a god. Conscience is ruled and regulated by what is expedient, or what society expects of men. They are pained at the sin which brings shame before men, but are not disconcerted at desires, emotions, and actions which are evil in the sight of God. It is a wonderful interesting study this—the relation of society to sin. For there are fashionable vices and respectable sins which are heinous in the sight of God, but the conscience is at ease because the spirit of the age does not condemn them. How important, then, it is to keep conscience enlightened by the Word of God and invigorated by the Holy Ghost! The end of the commandment is in the best sense to make you a law unto yourself. It is important to have the Bible in our heads, but it is most important to have Christ enthroned in the tribunal of conscience within.—W. M. S.

Ver. 5.—*The absence of hypocrisy.* "And faith unfeigned." We all dislike shams. Led by Carlyle, the English nation has lately heard many prophetic voices against them. We insist, in art, in dress, in manners, and in religion, on sincerity. Without this nothing is beautiful, because nothing is real. We hate feigned learning, feigned skill, feigned culture, and feigned superiority. The apostle tells us here that faith must be unfeigned. Now, if the end of the commandment is *love*, the argument is this, that the faith which is to be worked by such a glorious inspiration of charity must be an honest, earnest, real faith.

I. WE MUST BELIEVE IN HUMANITY BEFORE WE CAN LOVE MEN. Believe, that is, that there is an ideal of God in every man; that underneath his depravity and degradation there is a moral nature which may be renewed, and a life which may be transfigured into the glory of Christ. For man's conscience was made to know the truth, his heart to feel it, and his will to be guided and energized by it. If we think of men cynically or contemptuously, then there will be no earnest efforts to save that which is lost.

II. WE MUST BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF CHRIST AND HIS CROSS, OR WE SHALL NOT BE ENTHUSIASTIC IN PREACHING THEM. No doubter can be a good preacher. Men know and feel the power of ardent faith. The arrow will miss the mark if the hand of the archer shakes, or distrusts its weapon. The one great element of success is unfeigned

faith—a faith which says, “I believed, and therefore have I spoken.” There may be a variable faith, like that of the Vicar of Bray’s, which believed anything—Romanistic, Rationalistic, or Evangelical—for the sake of position. But the mask soon drops, and men, instead of receiving the truth, despise the false teacher. “We believe and *are sure* that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God,” is the essential basis of a true ministry. Such a faith will be touched with enthusiasm like unto his who said, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ Jesus our Lord.”

III. WE MUST BELIEVE IN A VITAL SENSE SO AS TO LIVE OUR BELIEF. An unfeigned faith is one that we practise ourselves; one that fills every channel of our being—our ethical life, our philanthropies, our missionary endeavours, our home joys and sanctities. There is a faith which is merely dogmatic—which holds fast the Christian doctrines, but fails to translate them into life. The atonement itself, so august and awful, must ever stand alone as a Divine sacrifice; but its moral effect is to be *lived*. “We thus judge, that if One died for all, then were all dead; and that we who live should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us and rose again.” Faith is not to be a wax-work fruit—something artificial and unreal—but the living vine, of which Christ is the root.—W. M. S.

Ver. 11.—*A gospel of glory.* “According to the glorious gospel.” These are the words of a true enthusiasm. St. Paul gloried in the gospel. We may read it, however, as in the Revised Version, “According to the gospel of the glory of God.” Either way the glory of it fills the heart of the apostle with intense rapture. No good work is done without enthusiasm. The great Italian artists—men like Angelico, Fra Bartolomeo, and Michael Angelo—associated heaven with earth in their work, and did it, not for mere pay, but for great ideal results. So also great apostles and reformers, like Paul, Wickliffe, and Luther, were enthusiasts. But all healthy enthusiasm is inspired by reality and truth. Some men have made shipwreck of religion because they lost the compass of the Word of God; and others, dependent on *feeling* alone, have wandered, being led by the *ignis-fatuus* of imagination alone.

I. PAUL SEES IN HIMSELF WHAT THE GOSPEL CAN DO. “Take *me*,” he says; “I was before a persecutor, and injurious.” What could account for such a change as is embodied in the man who from Saul became Paul? No theory of moral dynamics can stand, that suggests he lifted himself into so great a change. Neither could the Hebrew Church of that age, which was coldly ritual, sterile, and barren. “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Christ Jesus might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.” No man can be so ardent about a cure as he who has tried a physician; no man admires the great artist so much as he who has tested his own feeble powers. And now “what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son,” had done, and done in Paul: he is a proof of the gospel before he becomes a preacher of it.

II. PAUL GIVES A NEW SIGNIFICANCE TO THE WORD “GLORY.” On his lips glory takes a new meaning. He had seen the glories of the Cæsars, who raised their thrones on hecatombs of human lives, and filled their courts with unbounded luxuries and lusts. Surrounded by soldiers and courtesans, their glory was in their shame. He had seen the glories of the architects, sculptors, and artists, at Athens, Corinth, and Rome. But the glory of which he spoke was in a life that gave itself—that came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and that on the cross died for the sins of the whole world. It was the glory of goodness, the glory of compassion, the glory of self-sacrifice.

III. PAUL REJOICES TO TELL THE GOOD NEWS OF THIS GLORY. It is the glorious gospel, or the glorious “good news” for all men—Greek and Jew, barbarian and Scythian, bond and free. How simple a thing it seems—“good news”! and yet it is *speech* that moves the world! Homer is remembered, when the military heroes of Greece are forgotten. Songs live longer than thrones. This good news was of a Christ who had died and risen, and was working then in the hearts of men. Paul lived long enough to plant Churches, and to show that the cross could turn men “from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.” He could show them not only the root, but the tree; not only the seed, but the flower. It was good news in relation to man himself—to his

pre-ent history and his everlasting destiny. The gospel had made life desirable, and checked the false euthanasia of Roman suicide; and it had spread a great sky of immortality above men's heads, so that to live was Christ, and to die was gain.—W. M. S.

Ver. 11.—*The nature of God.* “Of the ble-sed God.” Prove that the gospel comes from God, and it must be blessed; for God is blessed in himself. His nature is light, which is always beautiful; and love, which is always beneficent.

I. THIS IS A DESCRIPTION OF THE DIVINE NATURE. Not of *some* of the attributes of that nature, but of the very heart and centre of it. Not the Omnipotent, the Omnipresent, the Omniscient; but the Blessed! Look at nature! Study its purity, its harmony, its exquisite adaptations of provision and plenty to the varied wants of all living things, show that God is not a Being of mere power or wisdom, but One whose works are very good, One who wished his creatures to share in his own blessedness. 1. *Look at his revelation.* Do we want beatitudes? Duty turned to joy? We find the way of peace and rest and joy in obedience to his will. 2. *Look at the Christ himself.* Blessed within, amid all outward forms of temptation and all endurances of trial. “That *my joy* may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.” 3. *Look at the cross.* Designed to make atonement, to reconcile man to God, and so to renew his image within, and to make man understand that separation from God was the root-cause of all his misery. The gospel is not only a revelation of doctrine; it is an unfolding of the Divine nature, into which we may be changed “from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

II. THIS IS THE UNIQUE REVELATION OF THE GOSPEL. False religions give prominence to aspects of power, and merge into dreads. The gospel alone shows that God is Love. And in revealing the blessed nature of God in his Son, it has shown us that evil is misery because it is another nature. Life apart from God is death—death to peace, purity, harmony, holiness. Men have in their experience testified to this. All is vanity apart from him. Over all life may be inscribed, “*Nihil sine Deo*”—“Nothing without God.” So Christ would lead us *to* the Father, unite us *with* the Father, and transform us into the likeness of the Father—One who is the *blessed* and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords.—W. M. S.

Ver. 11.—*Trustees of the truth.* “Which was committed to my trust.” Here Paul speaks of the preacher of this glorious gospel as a trustee. It is not a gospel of merely personal salvation; it is not designed to awaken only moral and spiritual admiration for its teachings; nor for the culture of immortal happiness, so far as we are ourselves alone concerned.

I. THE GOSPEL IS OURS IN TRUST. Water is sweet, but others are perishing with thirst. The open sky is beautiful, but others are in prison. Peace is restful, but others are in pain. What do you think in earthly matters of fraudulent or neglectful trustees? You rank them amongst the very worst of men. How many sons and daughters of the careful and the prudent have been ruined through the long years by negligent trustees!

II. THE GOSPEL AFFECTS ALL TRUSTEESHIPS. Its spirit is to pervade all that we have and are. Men are coming to see that knowledge, skill, wealth, are not only to be enjoyed for personal gratification, but to be used for the uplifting and bettering of others. These will, and always must be, “our own;” but we are to look also “on the things of others.” Do not fence in the park of your life, but act the steward of its beauties and its joys. Rights of possession there *are*, and yet responsibilities of possession too. Look at Christ. 1. He knew the secret of blessedness, and came to earth to reveal it. 2. He knew the grandeur of human nature, and came to live in it and to restore it. 3. He knew the mastery that evil had over us, and he came to break the fetters. 4. He knew that sin separated us from God, and he came to die, “the just for the unjust, to bring us unto God.” Our captains at sea are guardians of life, and bravely do they do their duty. Our soldiers are trustees of a nation's honour, and never have failed in the great crises of her life. And our great citizen-fellowships are trustees of broad rivers, open commons, and the health and well-being of the poor, and have striven to protect their interests. As Christians we are each and all trustees of the gospel. It is no mere ecclesiastical privilege; for, alas! ecclesiastics have too often been trustees only of their *own* rights, or the rights of their special Churches. We are all trustees of the

glorious gospel of the blessed God, and woe be to any of us who shirk our responsibilities or idly neglect our trust!—W. M. S.

Ver. 19.—*Human wreckage.* "Some have made shipwreck." Words sound differently to different men. Language is a "word-picture," and we must see the facts before we understand the word. Paul chooses a metaphor applied to character, which is so terrible when applied to disasters at sea. Many a beautiful vessel has arrested the gaze of admiring spectators as she spread her sails to the favouring breeze, and breasted the waters like a thing of life. But, on another shore, her shivered timbers and her shattered prow have been washed up as the wreck of a once gallant ship, her half-defaced name the only testimony to her fate. So Paul had seen men wrecked on the breakers of self-indulgence, vice, and folly. Paul associated loss of character with loss of faith. "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away have made shipwreck."

I. SHIPWRECK SOMETIMES COMES AT THE VERY COMMENCEMENT OF THE VOYAGE. The ship scarcely leaves the river before she runs aground. There has been too much self-confidence, and the Divine Pilot has not had the ship in hand.

II. SHIPWRECK SOMETIMES COMES AT THE CLOSE OF THE VOYAGE, when the ship is almost home; when from the masthead land was almost in sight. But the watch has not been kept. In the voyage of life we may have the cross on the flag, and the chart in the cabin, and the compass on the deck; but we sleep, as do others, and we are wrecked with the land almost in sight.

III. SHIPWRECK AFFECTS THE VERY HIGHEST ELEMENTS OF OUR BEING. "A good conscience," the sweetest meal to which ever a man sat down! The sublimest music, which no Beethoven or Mendelssohn can approach! The noblest heritage that a Moses could sacrifice Egypt for! A conscience cleansed by Christ's blood, enlightened by the Word of God, and quickened by the Holy Ghost. "A good conscience!" Wealth cannot purchase it, envy cannot steal it, poverty cannot harm it, and nought but sin can denude it of its crown. It is the strength of the confessor's endurance, the lustre of the sufferer's countenance, the peace of the martyr's heart. "A good conscience." Wreck that, and all is lost; and the sun of the moral firmament sets in darkness.—W. M. S.

Vers. 1—11.—*Introduction.* 1. *Sender.* "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Saviour, and Christ Jesus our Hope." It is usual for Paul to begin his letters by taking the designation of *apostle*. He thus claimed to write, and to order ecclesiastical affairs, under infallible direction. In thus writing to Timothy, who had no special need of being reminded of his authority, he would seem to give an *official* character to the letter. While he claimed authority, it was, at the same time, as himself *belonging* to Christ Jesus. Not satisfied with stating to whom he belonged in the authority he exercised, he further traces his apostleship, not, as in previous Epistles, up to its primal source in the will of God, but more immediately to the *commandment* of God or actual appointment after his conversion. He received his appointment from *God our Saviour*—a designation of God which in the New Testament is *peculiar* to the pastoral Epistles. It is introduced here as carrying with it the *obligation* on the part of Paul and Timothy to be the bearers of the Divine salvation to their fellow-men. He also received his appointment from *Christ Jesus*, whom he thus, the second time in the short space, introduces. By Christ, as acting for God, all appointments are made. The seven stars, *i.e.* Christian ministers, are held by him in his right hand; and he has the whole ordering of their *locality* and *time* of service. In this second introduction of his name he is designated *our Hope*, *i.e.* he from whom the *appointed* have their reward, and in whom it subsists. 2. *To whom addressed.* "Unto Timothy, my true child in faith." Not according to the flesh, but in the sphere of faith, was Timothy his child. Thus he is accustomed to regard his converts; he is both father and mother to them. We may, therefore, conclude that Timothy, though of godly parentage and with godly influences working efficaciously in him, owed it to Paul's instrumentality that he was *converted to Christianity*. It was in Lystra, a city of Lycaonia, on Paul's *second visit*, that Timothy joined him as his *assistant*. He was his *true child*, not only in his being his convert, but in his having the evidence of that in his being *after the same stamp*—like-minded, as he is called in Phil. ii. 20; one who seemed instinctively to enter

into his views and plans, and therefore, we may say, *the ideal of an assistant*. 3. *Salutation*. "Grace, mercy, peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord." The insertion of *mercy* in the salutation is a peculiarity of the Epistles to Timothy. There is invoked grace on him as *unworthy*, mercy on him as *exposed to suffering*, peace on him as the result of his being graciously and mercifully dealt with. The Source from which the blessing is invoked is *God the Father*. It is to the *fatherly feeling* in God—that which is highest in his nature, and with which redemption originated—that our appeal is to be made for saving blessings for ourselves and for our friends. In the thought of Christ as the second Source of blessing, Paul finds occasion for the third introduction of the name of Christ. He is thought of as our Lord, *i.e.* the sovereign Dispenser of the saving blessings in his Father's house, of which there are enough and to spare.

I. CHARGE DEVOLVED ON TIMOTHY. "As I exhorted thee to tarry at Ephesus, when I was going into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine, neither to give heed to fables and endless genealogies, the which minister questionings, rather than a dispensation of God which is in faith; *so do I now*." The time of the journey into Macedonia would seem to be after the first imprisonment at Rome, beyond the period included in the Acts of the Apostles. This brings the date of the Epistle well on to the close of the apostle's life. If this is correct, then Paul's confident anticipation of never again being in Ephesus was not verified. For it is here mentioned as his point of departure for Macedonia. He would have taken Timothy with him; but there were manifestations in the Church at Ephesus which necessitated him to leave him behind. There were certain persons not otherwise characterized, who taught a different doctrine, *i.e.* different from the gospel as preached by Paul. It could not be called a different gospel as in the Galatian Churches; it was rather something taught by itself which tended to frustrate the ends of the gospel. It was a *giving heed to fables and endless genealogies*. We come upon *incipient Gnosticism* here, of which we have already seen traces in the Epistle to the Colossians. This is best known as Eastern mysticism in contact with Christianity. But there seems reason to believe that there was a prior contact of Eastern mysticism with Judaism in the form of *Essenism*. This has many elements in common with Gnosticism; the peculiarity is that it is Jewish materials that are thrown into the mystic form. A great feature in Gnosticism is the interposing of *intermediate agencies*, to account for the creation of the world, supposed to be evil, so that God could not come into immediate contact with it in its creation. What were afterward known as *aeons* or emanations, in the Epistle to the Colossians are called angels. Here the *interminable genealogies* found in rabbinical speculations are associated with the intermediate agencies. God created a being at a certain remove from himself, with a name which they were in a position to give. This being created another at a further remove from God, who also was named. The object was to come down to the name of one who was bad enough to create the world; but it was difficult to know where to stop. Upon these genealogies ingenuity was exercised; but, as there was nothing of the element of certainty in them, they only ministered questionings or disputings as to the names. What Timothy was to direct his efforts to was to set forth *the dispensation of God which is in faith*, *i.e.* the Divine order of things, as seen partly in creation and specially in redemption, in which faith can lay hold on certainty. "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which do appear." By faith also we understand that Infinite Love has in Christ Jesus provided a full atonement for our sins.

II. THE END OF THE CHARGE. "But the end of the charge is love." The link of connection is the charge to be given by Timothy to the false teachers. The thought which follows is, these teachers missing the aim of what is charged on them. We have here, then, not the end aimed at in others, as the end of the physician is health (which is Ellicott's idea), but plainly *the end aimed at in what is charged on the teacher*. The words are suitable to one who is receiving a charge. "What is the end of what I charge on you?" says the giver of the charge; "it is that you have your being filled with love." This is the qualification of the healer of the body: he must be thoroughly interested in the recovery of his patients. So it may be said to be the main qualification of the healer of the soul: he must be thoroughly interested in the spiritual health of those

who are committed to his care. 1. *The love of the teacher must be associated with pure elements.* "Out of a pure heart." He must have, mingled with his affection, and giving character to it, an antipathy to sin in every form, to unreality, to superficiality; and a passion for holiness in every form, for reality, for depth. 2. *The love of the teacher must be associated with conscientiousness.* "And a good conscience." He must have, in the first place, a conscience that faithfully witnesses to his duty, to the methods he should follow in his work, to the forms of service his love for the people should take. And he must have, in the second place—which is also included in the scriptural idea of a good conscience—the approval of his own mind, the consciousness that he is using all diligence in carrying out his ideas of duty, in following his methods, in his endeavours to be serviceable. 3. *The love of the teacher must be fed from the highest Source.* "And faith unfeigned." His faith brings him into contact with an invisible Saviour, by whom he is elevated in his whole spirit as a teacher, at the fountain of whose love his love is fed, and not only in intensity but in all that it needs of purity and direction. Only his faith must be unfeigned; for if it is not in his life, if it is only as a mask, then he can only come into contact with his own imaginings, by which certainly he cannot be elevated, from which source his love cannot properly be fed.

III. THE END MISSED. "From which things some having swerved have turned aside unto vain talking; desiring to be teachers of the Law, though they understand neither what they say, nor whereof they confidently affirm." The end was missed by the false teachers. They did not hit the purity of motive, conscientiousness, unfeignedness of faith, that should have given character to their affection. Being thus incapable of profitable discourse, they "turned aside unto vain talking." They gave themselves out to be "teachers of the Law," i.e. the Mosaic Law, especially the Law of the ten commandments, afterward referred to in detail. But they were doubly disqualified. They were *confused* in what they said. They were, therefore, different from the teachers of the Law who were opposed in the Churches of Galatia. For these were not chargeable with incoherencies; they knew well enough what they said in seeking to subvert Christian liberty. We are rather to think of mystical interpretation of the Law. They were further disqualified in not understanding their subject, viz. the Law; the confidence of their affirmations being in proportion to the extent of their ignorance.

IV. USE OF THE LAW. "But we know that the Law is good, if a man use it lawfully, as knowing this, that law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and unruly, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for man-slayers, for fornicators, for abusers of themselves with men, for men-stealers, for liars, for false swearers, and if there be any other thing contrary to the sound doctrine." The apostle begins by laying down a proposition about the Law which no one would be disposed to controvert. It was a boon from Heaven if used according to its intention. In the next proposition he indicates the intention of the law as coming under the intention of all law. His position is, that law is not made for a righteous man. "Let us think of the relation in which a good man stands to the laws of his country. In one sense, indeed, he is under them; but in another and higher sense he is above them, and moves along his course with conscious freedom, as if he scarcely knew of their existence. For what is the object of such laws but to prevent, under severe penalties, the commission of crime? Crime, however, is already the object of his abhorrence; he needs no penalties to keep him from it. He would never harm the person or property of a neighbour, though there were not a single enactment in the statute-book on the subject. His own love of good and hatred of evil keep him in the path of rectitude, not the fines, imprisonments, or tortures which the law hangs around the path of the criminal. The law was not made for *him*." As truly can it be said that the Law of the ten commandments is not made for the Christian, who is the righteous man. For he is justified by the faith of Christ, i.e. he is regarded as having fulfilled the whole Law in Christ. What more, then, has the Law to do with him? And further, so far as he answers to the conception of a Christian, he is sanctified by the faith of Christ. He is in Christ as the Source of his holiness. He has got beyond the discipline of the Law, inasmuch as he has got it already in his heart. Thus does the apostle take the ground from under the would-be teachers of the Law, whose position would be that the Law mystically interpreted was necessary to putting the crown of perfection on the Christian. The Law is made for *unrighteous*

persons, of whom many classes are mentioned. These are grouped with reference to the two tables of the Law. Under the head of breakers of the first table, *i.e.* the unrighteous toward God, are given six classes in pairs. There are *the lawless and unruly*. With aggravation, they refuse to be under law, making their own pleasure their law. There are *the ungodly and sinners*. They have thrown off all awe of God. There are *the unholy and profane*. Instead of being consecrated to God, they trample on holy things. If the division of commandments had been followed, the classes would have been deniers of God, idolaters, the profane, sabbath-breakers. Generally, it is disregard of what is Divine that is brought out under this head. Under the second head, of breakers of the second table, *i.e.* the unrighteous toward man, are given eight classes, six of them in pairs. Here the division of commandments is followed. There are *murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers*. "Smitters" is preferred by some. These are the breakers of the fifth commandment with the greatest aggravation. Next by itself stands the class of *man-slayers*. These are the breakers of the sixth commandment. There are *fornicators and abusers of themselves with men*. These workers of abomination are the breakers of the seventh commandment. Next by itself stands the class of *men-stealers*. The apostle puts the man-stealer as the most flagrant of all breakers of the eighth commandment. No theft of a man's goods can be compared with that most atrocious act which steals *the man himself*, and robs him of that free will which is the first gift of his Creator. And of this crime all are guilty who, whether directly or indirectly, are engaged in, or uphold, from whatever pretence, the making or keeping of slaves. There are *liars and false swearers*. These are the breakers of the ninth commandment. He does not go on to the breakers of the tenth commandment, but concludes with the greatest inclusiveness, "And if there be any other thing contrary to the sound doctrine" (*i.e.* not morbid, as the teaching of the mystical interpreters). The apostle's position is that the Law is made for all these unrighteous persons. But for things being in an abnormal state there would not have been the writing down of so plain duties in the ten commandments, especially in the form, "Thou shalt not." The Law is made for sinners, in being intended to hold up before them a proper representation of righteousness, by which, if they are convicted, they should also feel shut up to the righteousness which is by faith. Has the Law, then, no use for the Christian? Only in so far as he is not Christianized. It is of use in keeping him under grace as the source of his security and happiness. And it is of use in so far as it holds up a representation of righteousness that reaches beyond his attainment. The truth is well brought out in one of the symbolical books of the Lutherans. "Although the Law was not made for the righteous (as the apostle testifies, 1 Tim. i. 9), yet this is not to be understood as if the righteous might live without law; for the Divine Law is written upon their hearts. The true and genuine meaning, therefore, of Paul's words is, that the Law cannot bring those who have been reconciled to God through Christ under its curse, and that its restraint cannot be irksome to the renewed, since they delight in the Law of God after the inner man. But believers are not completely and perfectly renewed in this life; and though their sins are covered by the absolutely perfect obedience of Christ, so as not to be imputed to believers to their condemnation, and though the mortification of the old Adam and the renovation in the spirit of their mind has been begun by the Holy Spirit, yet the old Adam still remains in nature's powers and affections."

V. ACCORDANCE WITH THE GOSPEL. "According to the gospel of the glory of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust." The gospel may be presented either in relation to man, or in relation to God. In relation to man, the gospel is manifold. It is a gospel of peace; it quiets the guilty conscience. It is a gospel of purity; it purifies the heart. It is a gospel of comfort; it imparts to us a strong consolation under all the ills of this life. It is a gospel of hope; it opens up to us beyond this bounded life the boundless prospect of the life everlasting. In relation to God, too, the gospel is manifold. It is the gospel of a righteous God; it is a satisfaction of Divine justice. It is the gospel of a gracious God; it is an overflow of Divine mercy and compassion. It is the gospel of a wise God; it is the application of Divine intelligence to a very difficult problem. It is the gospel of an almighty God; it is an agency charged with Divine power. It is here the gospel, not of a righteous God, not of a gracious God, not of a wise God, not of an almighty God, but of a blessed God. And

in this connection it is put forward as embodying the glory of the blessed God. "The gospel of the glory of the blessed God." Such are the words of Paul, the great gospel preacher, to his pupil Timothy. Consider, in the *first* place, how it belongs to the blessed God to communicate his blessedness; and, in the *second* place, how the gospel is a communication of the glory of the blessedness of God. First, then, *how it belongs to the blessed God to communicate his blessedness*. The "blessed God" is an uncommon conception in Scripture. We indeed find—"Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?"—"The Creator, who is blessed for ever;" "God blessed for ever." But "blessed" there is adorable, worthy to be praised; literally, "worthy to be well spoken of." It is the word which conveys an acknowledgment of God's claim to undivided worship. Whereas "blessed" here is equivalent to "happy" as applied to us. God is said to be blessed, as we are said to be happy. And seeing "blessed" is used in a totally different sense in Scripture, the "happy God" would best convey the sense here. And we see no reason why we should not say that God is happy, when in the original the word which is applied to God is the same which is applied to man. There is only one other place in Scripture where God is said to be thus blessed; and, noticeably, it is in this same Epistle: "The blessed and only Potentate;" literally, "the happy and only Potentate." It is as if the inspired writer consciously supplied a want. It had never been said that God was happy. So twice he introduces this conception into this late Epistle. And it is to be regretted that in the Revised Version "happy" has not been substituted for "blessed" in the two places. The blessedness of God is not different in kind from ours. If there is any deep calm in our minds, that is the same with the calm of God. If any true thrill of joy passes through our hearts, that is the same which passes through the heart of God. But blessedness is God's in a way that it is not ours. We are only blessed in him who gave us being, and for whom we have being. And ours is a blessedness that can be added to. We are finite, and there will always be, in the fact of our finitude, a desire to be more blessed. But God is *self-blessed*. We think of this by means of the conception of God existing far away in a past eternity, when there was yet no other intelligence, not even the faintest reflection of his glory in any created object, and as happy then as now when he has peopled a universe. Such a thought is not bearable by us, and God has not asked us to dwell upon it; and we would say that, while we may be forced thus to think of Godhead as self-poised, or resting in self, we may at the same time be allowed to dwell upon the far more pleasing thought of the Three Persons of the Godhead as resting in one another. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are happy in one another's society and fellowship. It will be felt that that thought, which is denied to the Unitarian, greatly relieves the thought of a God isolated, in his blessedness, away before and out of time. Still the fact remains, that as the one God is infinitely blessed, so also he is blessed in himself. As there is in his boundless being no void of blessedness to fill up, no jarring note to correct, so there can be no desire to make himself more blessed. But it perfectly consists with that that he should desire to make others blessed. This is in keeping with what we find among men. It is true of the miserable man that he is selfish. It is there that he is wrong, at the very commencement. In the very act of enclosing himself, or in the habit of keeping himself enclosed within his own shell, he shuts himself out from blessedness. He does not go out to God. At every approach and overture of God, he draws back further within himself. His sin is that he will keep within himself, and will not go out in confession and desire and faith toward God. And so God does not bless him. He does not go out in love to God's creatures, and so these do not bless him. And thus, shutting himself out from blessedness, his tendency is to grudge blessedness to others. He has a secret joy in misfortune. He could see a funeral pall drawn over all that is fair in nature. He would have the smile to vanish from our countenance. He would have sweet voices hushed. He would have all things brought down to his own dull level. And, worst outcome of all—yet we would say a necessary outcome—he grudges even God his blessedness. His feeling is that, being miserable himself, he could see God less happy than he is. The happy man, on the other hand, is unselfish. It is by being open that he comes to be happy. He goes out to God in meek abnegation of self, and so God blesses him. He goes out to God's creatures in delight and gratitude and mercy, and so he receives contributions to his happiness on every side.

Now, just as the miserable man would have a miserable world around him, so the happy man would have a happy world around him. He would distribute happiness most lavishly. He would admit all to a share of it. He would have all to be happy as he is happy. "I would to God," said Paul to Agrippa, "that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, *except these bonds.*" The happy man is magnanimous; he wishes ill to no one; he invokes blessing even upon his enemies. Out of his own heart of blessedness there seems to rise the desire to make others blessed. And so, although God can have no desire to make himself more blessed, yet, being full of blessedness himself, he desires to make others blessed. Creation may be taken as an expression of that desire on the part of God. Creation is just God flowing out in blessedness. It is God saying, "Let me not keep my blessedness to myself; let others be blessed with me." What purpose in creation can we conceive into which that does not enter? It is true that we are created to give praise to God; but that is more from our side. From God's side, it is perhaps better to say that he created us, not so much that he might receive our praise, as that we might receive his blessedness. God, we may suppose, would not have created for the mere purpose of creating, however pleasurable that is to him. Neither would he have created merely to have a sphere for the exercise of his power. What to him were empty worlds in which to store up his power, through which at will to roll the thunder of his power? Neither would he have created for the mere pleasure of working according to a plan, or of having the marvels of his wisdom set forth before him. What to him were the clothing matter with plants and trees, touching each minutest part with his plastic hand, and varying every form? The blessed God created, not to have pleasure himself, but to give pleasure. It was that, we think, that moved him to create. And therefore he made living creatures—creatures capable of receiving pleasure. And he cared for having nothing in the world which was not to bless them. From the tiniest insect that dances out its lifetime in a summer sun, through all the orders of living beings up to man himself, invested with lordship, he has only one design—to make existence pleasurable to his creatures. True, there is evil in the world, reaching down from man to the other creatures which necessarily share with him his earthly lot. But there is reason for the evil; and the evil, it is to be observed, is not in the creation. It has been induced on an all-good creation. In no case does God as a final end make a being to inflict pain on it. And even as it is, with the evil introduced into our world, who will say that God intends our destruction? It would have been a very different world if there had been the shadowing forth of any such intention. It is of things as they are that Paul says, taking a broad retrospective view of God's dealings in providence, "He left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." He would not continue to make provision for our support, did he mean our destruction. And not only does he make provision for our support, but he gives us all things richly to enjoy. He gives us food, and the other necessities of life in abundance. And not only so, but he gives us many things for the mere pleasure of them. He arranges objects in nature with a regard to beauty. He richly colours them; he floods them with a kindly light. He gives us flowers; he gives us the song of birds. He gives us rainbows and sunsets, and clouds of many a form. And he curtains the earth, that he may show us the glory of the starry heavens. And all these things he gives us chiefly as luxuries. We say, then, that even in nature God testifies to his desire, to his intention to make us happy. Even in nature, which has been spoken of as "red in tooth and claw with ravin," God gives us the promise of the coming gospel. Consider, in the second place, *how the gospel is a communication of the glory of the blessedness of God.* We remark (1) that this is true of the gospel, if we consider *who are made blessed by it.* It is a gospel of blessedness to us. It does not need to be proved that we are not in the state for which God intended us. We do not bear the impress of the blessed God. The lark mounts up on wings of joy to the sky. Song seems to be of its very nature. And as soon as it has got strength of wing, it mounts up and pours out its song. We could scarcely think of a lark in a summer day, hiding itself away from the light and refusing to sing. But it is not so natural for us to be happy. We are accustomed to misery. We do not expect men to be highly joyous. We do not expect *men* to be musical to the height of their nature. We expect a certain depression, a certain note

of sadness in all their joy. What better confession could there be that we are miserable? We are sadly out of tune. Who can bring joy out of us? Now, here comes in the gospel to make us happy. God could have made others happy. If there had not been enough, he could have created more, and poured out his happiness upon them. But no; here are a few miserable beings. Out of the hundred sheep, here is one that has strayed away in the wilds and haunts of beasts of prey. Out of the countless myriads that are in God's universe, here are a few that are miserable. And the blessed God says, "I would make them happy; I would bring back joy to their hearts; I would pour out my blessedness on them." As if one more philanthropic than the rest should say, "I will not go to the homes of peace and health and plenty, and try to make those already blessed doubly blessed; but I will go to the prisons, and to the hospitals, and to the alleys, and, wherever I see suffering, I will attempt to relieve it." Glorious gospel, then, that has respect to us who are miserable! But far more glorious, if it is considered how we are miserable. We are miserable by our own act. In our folly and sin, we have thrown away blessedness. We have sold it for a mess of pottage. Strange it is, yet it is truly none other than this, that we have willed our own misery. And, having guiltily willed our own misery, God, we can suppose, might have willed it too. He might have said, "I have made all my creatures for happiness; but these—these whom I have honoured above others—they will not have it; they have spurned it away from them, and so by their own act, not by my wish, they are miserable." But glorious gospel, in spite of our sin, the blessed God willed our happiness. And in his compassions he said, "I will raise them out of their misery." And so his language now is, "I have no pleasure in your misery." Thrice to this effect he speaks in Ezekiel: "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God;" "For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God;" "Say unto them that pine away in their sins, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." Here, then, is our glorious gospel. The blessed God, the Fountain of blessedness, wishes you to be blessed. Whoever you are that are unhappy, that are pining away in your sins, that are afraid of eternal misery, believe it, that is not according to God's heart. To the most wretched, woe-begone, sin-distracted soul on the face of the earth, we are warranted in the Name of the happy God to say—Be happy. We remark (2) the gospel is glorious, if we consider *the means by which we are made blessed*. If creation was pleasing to God, it was also easy. He had simply to will the existence of happy creatures. But he had to do more than will us sinners to be happy. We look upon a great city; we think by what means it has been built up; we think of the incalculable labour that has been spent upon it. We think how generations of men have toiled hard at it, with what anxiety they have contrived, with what patience and endurance they have laid stone upon stone, and added house to house and street to street. We think how many able men have spent their lives, sacrificed their available strength, in the building up of this city, and then we think with what majestic ease, and how in a moment of time, God might have placed it there complete. But to make us sinners happy, was work more difficult for God than for us the building up of a city—work requiring greater sacrifice of life. But glorious gospel, glorious beyond all parallel, glorious beyond all conception, the blessed Son in the bosom of the blessed Father said, "I will undertake it; I will suffer and die to make men happy." And so he takes measures to suffer and die. He descends into our humanity. And do you say it is man who is there, suffering and agonizing and dying? Say, rather, it is God in our humanity. Why, the means used to make us happy are altogether stupendous in their proportions. And dreadfully hard-hearted and void of all feeling must we be, if we can see these means used before our eyes, and yet we be content to remain in our misery, as though God had done nothing but had allowed us to suffer the consequences of our sins. Oh, let us learn the lesson that Calvary has to teach us about God's desire to make us happy. Let us dismiss every dark conception of God from our minds which an evil heart may throw up. Let us feel that on God's part there is an infinite willingness, nay, an infinite anxiety and longing to bless us. And let us heartily respond to God's desire to bless us, in the way prescribed by him. Let us take, as the object of our faith, what has come out of that heart of blessedness, and is now evidently set before us. Let us take, as the object of our faith, the full and free and meritorious righteousness of the crucified Son of God, to make us just and

holy, that so we may be happy. We remark (3) that the gospel is glorious, if we consider *the nature of the blessedness that is communicated by it*. The blessedness for which man was intended, and to which he would have attained through obedience, was very great. Passing safely through the gate of trial and peril, he would have attained—shall we say?—to a God-like blessedness. He would have had the blessedness of a free, intelligent being. He would have been made blessed with God, and in the enjoyment of God, to all eternity. Now, the gospel is glorious in proclaiming this, that man is not to be less blessed than he would have been had he never fallen from blessedness. He is not to be mulcted in blessedness. He is not to have a stigma upon him to mark the dishonour he formerly did to God. He is not to be placed on a lower order of blessed beings. Nay, in the fact that Christ has taken our human nature into glorious union with his Divine nature, have we not thereby been made capable of a higher blessedness? And not only so, but we have been *redeemed*. And how peculiarly blessed it is to be redeemed! It is more than if we had stood. We can now not only say, “Our God,” but “Our Redeemer.” How often does God take the name in Isaiah! “Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer.” It is a new tie, “Thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee.” Our peace is peculiarly blessed; it is the feeling of reconciliation, the sweet sense of sin forgiven. Our joy is peculiarly blessed; it is the joy of salvation. It is the sense of indebtedness to Divine grace. We were on the broad road to destruction. We were down in the horrible pit, and in the miry clay; but we have been saved, we have been redeemed. And does not the woe we have escaped sweeten our present joy? Can we ever forget it? Our heaven, we think, will begin with a sight of the woe of which we were worthy. And then we have been redeemed by God. “Your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.” And does it not heighten our blessedness to remember that we owe it to the grace of the most holy God? And then he has redeemed us by no less glorious a Being than his own well-beloved Son, and at the expense of that Son’s life. Is that not fitted to raise the soul to its most joyful exercise? The blessedness of every intelligent being has been heightened in connection with this salvation. For views have been presented by it of the character of God which could not otherwise have been presented. Still, there is always this additional in our case. We are the parties concerned; we are the parties for whom all this has been done; we are the parties for whom this great salvation has been provided. It is a glorious gospel, then, we say. It makes us doubly blessed. It seems to contain the elements of an ecstatic bliss. Ever as we realize the greatness of the redemption, we shall become more gloriously blessed. We conclude with two practical remarks. First, let us keep near to the Source of blessedness by faith and prayer and meditation. Let us not go out to any creaturely good, far less to evil, as though it were the fountain of pleasure; but let us go out to the blessed God himself, especially in the glorious gospel, that we may have our hearts filled with a hallowed and satisfying joy. “Whosoever drinketh of this water”—of mere creaturely pleasure—“shall thirst again: but whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up to everlasting life.” In the second place, being blessed ourselves, let us seek to make blessed. That is to be like the happy God. Let us make sacrifices for the happiness of others. Let us count those moments the happiest of our existence in which we lose sight of self, in prayerful or active devotion to the interests of those whom Providence puts in our way, or more specially commits to our care. And if sin was not an inseparable obstacle in the way of God blessing us, let it not be an inseparable obstacle in the way of our seeking to bless others. “But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.”—R. F.

Vers. 12—17.—*Personal digression.* I. THANKFULNESS FOR BEING APPOINTED BY CHRIST TO HIS SERVICE. “I thank him that enabled me, even Christ Jesus our Lord, for that he counted me faithful, appointing me to his service.” At the close of the eleventh verse Paul brings in his relation to the gospel of the glory of the happy God. It was a trust committed to him, *i.e.* it was made his great business to convey the message

of happiness to his fellow-men. And as he was made responsible, so also he was empowered. He was not sent a warfare on his own charges. He was supplied with all that was necessary for the discharge of the duties connected with the trust. And so he cannot refrain from turning aside for a little, to pour forth his soul in gratitude to him who empowered him as he also gave him the trust, even Christ Jesus our Lord, the great Head of the Church, from whom proceed all ministerial appointments and all ministerial qualifications. What called forth his gratitude was, that Christ reposed confidence in him in appointing him to his service. He saw that he was one who could be used and trusted for the furtherance of the gospel; and so he gave him the appointment and the qualifications. To be assured of this as Paul was is great joy. How thankful ministers should be, if they have some evidence, in their own earnestness and in the fruits of their ministry, that they have not mistaken their calling!

II. THE CONSIDERATION OF HIS PREVIOUS LIFE. "Though I was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: howbeit I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." The gratitude of the apostle was enhanced by the consideration of his persecuting career. He was before a blasphemer, his evil speaking being directed against the Name of Jesus of Nazareth. He was also a persecutor even in this respect, that he compelled others to blaspheme. And he rose to the full conception of a persecutor in the *tyrannical* way in which he went about the work of persecution. At this stage of his life he was far removed from being the minister of Christ. But though he showed no mercy, he obtained mercy. There was this to be said for him, that what he did against Christ he did *ignorantly*. He acted under an erroneous impression. It was not that he knew Christ to be the Son of God, and hated him for his Divine credentials, especially because he manifested the Divine goodness. But he was carried away by zeal for the Jewish religion, which, he thought, was greatly endangered by the triumphs of Christianity. He was thus not in the most direct, most deliberate way, against Christ. And, so far as he was not throwing away the most sacred convictions, he was within the pale of mercy. He was within the scope of the Saviour's intercession from the throne, if we are to regard it as conformed to his intercession from the cross, which was in these words: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do"—words which are echoed by Peter in his address to the Jews, "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." It was in a state of *unbelief* that he was ignorant. This implied that he had not followed his lights as others had followed theirs, not greater than his. He had been directed away from Christianity by confidence in his own righteousness. And he had given way to the disposition, so natural to the depraved heart, to make a tyrannical use of power. He was, therefore, most culpable, standing in need of repentance and forgiveness, as Peter went on to impress on the Jews in the address just referred to: "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out."

III. GRACE ABOUNDING EXCEEDINGLY. "And the grace of our Lord abounded exceedingly with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." In Rom. v. Paul says of sin that it abounded; here the same word is used of grace, with an addition to it which gives it the force of a superlative. He labours to express the stretch of grace which our Lord had to make toward him when he, a guilty persecutor, was saved. His salvation was accompanied by the two graces, *faith* and *love*. From being a disbeliever in Christianity he became a humble believer in it, even preaching the faith of which formerly he made havoc. From having the spirit of the persecutor he came to have the spirit of the Christian, forgiving those who persecuted him, and seeking to subdue men, not by force, but by the power of Christian truth and example. It is said of this love that it is *in Christ Jesus*—subsisting in him, and determined in its outgoings by him. We can understand that his own experience of salvation had to do with his eminence as a minister of Christ. It filled him with deep personal gratitude to his Saviour. It urged him to labour, so as to take revenge on himself for the evil he had done. It fitted him for sympathizing with others in such condition as that in which he had been. And it enabled him the better to understand the sweet gentle spirit of the religion of Christ, that he could contrast it with his own unlovely persecuting zeal.

IV. THE GOSPEL THROUGH WHICH GRACE OPERATED. 1. *Reliability of the gospel*. "Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptance." When our Epistle was written, this was one of the sayings that passed as proverbs in Christian circles. This pro-

factory formula is peculiar to the pastoral Epistles. The first clause, which occurs five times, points to the certitude of the gospel. The would-be teachers of the Law—apparently Essenes—dealt in fables for which there was no ground of certainty, and in genealogies or namings of intermediate agencies, which only ministered disputings as to the names. The apostle regards the gospel as the embodiment of certainty. Venturing our immortal souls upon the truth of this saying, it will not prove a myth, but a glorious reality. The second clause, which occurs twice, points to the saying as worthy of a universal welcome. Let all men lay hold upon it as an essentially good saying—good for the whole nature; it is only the reception it deserves. 2. *Particular form in which the gospel is presented.* "That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." This is the gospel in all simplicity, to which the aged apostle cleaves. The Anointed of God for salvation said of himself, "I came out from the Father, and am come into the world." The world is to be understood in the physical sense; it is the earth, however, not in the purity of the conception, but the earth as it has become the congenial abode for sinners. It could not be said of Christ when he was here, that this was his original or congenial abode. He came into the world, he came from a pure world, from the Father, and that meant a world of highest purity. And what drew him to this world, with all its *uncongeniality*? Jesus, the Name which he has made his own, the Name which is above every name, points to his nature as love. It is of the nature of love to find a congenial outlet in saving. But whom on this earth did Christ come to save? Men who were wronged, upon whom superhuman powers were causelessly inflicting tortures? Did he come to assert their innocence against their strong oppressors? No; men who were in the wrong themselves, who were wrongers of God, and were the causes of their own misery. It was sinners that drew the Saviour down to earth. He longed to save them from their misery, from themselves as the guilty causes of their misery, from their sinful habits and associations, and to make them pure as the heaven from which he came. In saving sinners, he had to suffer from sinners, in his purity coming into contact with their impurity, and exposing him to their hate. He had especially to suffer in the room of sinners, in all the loneliness of a pure, perfect life, treading the wine-press of the Divine wrath against sin. 3. *Individualization of the gospel.* "Of whom I am chief." He was not at the head of sinners in this sense, that at one time he had reached a point beyond which sinning could not go in heinousness. He had not committed the sin against the Holy Ghost. He had not sinned like Judas, in close neighbourhood to Christ and in clear impression of his Divinity. He had never been, in sinning, beyond the pale of mercy. Neither was he in the position to compare himself with all who had obtained mercy, and to say infallibly that he was the greatest of them all. But he was at the head of sinners in his sense of his own utter unworthiness apart from Christ. That unworthiness he viewed chiefly, we may say, in the lurid light of his persecuting career. It was so complete a self-revelation, that he could not keep it from coming up before his imagination when he thought of self. But this self-revelation was not all before his conversion. He knew how self was ever seeking to mingle with all he did. In the whole discovery, then, of what he was apart from Christ, as one for whom the gospel was intended, he could say in all truthfulness of feeling, and with no decrease of truthfulness as he advanced in the Christian life, but rather an increase, that he was at the head of the class of sinners.

V. ENCOURAGEMENT TO SINNERS. "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me as chief might Jesus Christ show forth all his long-suffering, for an ensample of them which should hereafter believe on him unto eternal life." There was a fitness in Paul as chief in obtaining mercy also coming at an early period in the history of the Christian Church, for the sake of future generations. He was a typical illustration in what happened in his case of the fulness of the long-suffering of Christ. For the first thirty years of his life he was going in the wrong direction altogether. As he drew near the end of that period he seemed far enough away from believing, in the active violent part he took against Christ. But Christ did not, as he could have done, make his hostility to recoil upon his own head. But he treated him magnanimously, as one who is conscious of pure intention and forgiving love can do his foe. He treated him without haste, giving him space for experience, for thinking about the Divine dealing, and for seeing his error. And, in the end, Paul was subdued into believing,

to the praise of the long-suffering of Christ. Whoever thinks he is far enough away from believing, in resistance to the Divine leadings, in hostility offered to Christ, Paul would have him to be encouraged by his example to believe on Christ, the certain end of this believing being eternal life, or possession, up to our capacity, of the blessedness of the Divine life.

VI. DOXOLOGY. "Now unto the King eternal, incorruptible, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen." The apostle concludes his personal digression with a doxology which is unique in its character, and, we may be sure, appropriate. God is styled, as he is nowhere else in the Scriptures, literally "King of the ages," *i.e.* Sovereign Controller of the vast periods under which centuries and millenniums are included. Outside of them himself in his absolute eternity, he sways all that takes place in them. He can be long-suffering as he is in Christ; he does not need to be in haste, having the ages in which to work out his purposes. He is also styled "incorruptible," as he is also in Rom. i. 23; and "invisible," as he is in Col. i. 15 and Heb. ii. 27. There is great difficulty in all religions in rising above gross notions of God. As a pure Spirit there is denied of him the corruptibility and visibility which pertain to our corporeal nature. There is not, therefore, permitted a corporeal representation, or any image of him, as tending to degrade our conception of him. He is further styled "the only God," as in ch. vi. 15 he is styled "the only Potentate." This seems to be chiefly directed against the Essene religion, which invested their intermediate agents with Divine powers of creation. To God, as thus exalted, is ascribed, with a fulness of expression, honour and glory (as in Rev. v. 13) to the ages of ages over which the Divine existence extends.—R. F.

Vers. 18—20.—*Recurrence to Timothy.* 1. *The charge.* "This charge I commit unto thee, my child Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that by them thou mayest war the good warfare; holding faith and a good conscience." The reference seems back to ver. 3, which, though distant, is the only charge which has been defined, *viz. the charge laid on Timothy*, that he should charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine, neither to give heed to fables and endless genealogies. This involved his coming into contact with these men, and so there is naturally introduced the idea of warfare. He was to embrace his opportunity in Ephesus of warring the good warfare. "Knighthood" is Luther's word, the suggestion being the whole service in war that is required of a good Christian knight, such as he would wish the youthful Timothy to be. It is the good warfare; for it is not mere romance, but a warfare against all forms of sin—a warfare in the Name of the Saviour and with his gospel, and a warfare which has the promise of success. To call forth the knightly qualities in Timothy, Paul calls up the prophecies which went before on him. These were founded on the good hopes which he awakened in good men, when first he began to show his qualities; he must not disappoint these good hopes. As prophecies, or uttered under the inspiration of the Spirit prior to or at his introduction into office, they were to be taken as a Divine indication that he was being put to his proper work. They would also, we may believe, point to the hard work which, as a good knight, he would not fear to face. Thus using the prophecies, they would be a Divine assistance to him; they would be as armour in which he was clad. Especially, however, with a view to what is to follow, would the apostle impress on him the importance of holding faith and a good conscience. Prophecies, expressions of good opinion, are only useful in so far as they help us to lay hold by faith upon the great Source of strength, in whom alone we can show all knightly activity and endurance. They are also useful, only if we do not allow them to seduce us to part with a good conscience, our better self—that inward monitor that from moment to moment points to us our duty, and in whose approval we can feel that we have the approval of God. 2. *Warning.* "Which some having thrust from them made shipwreck concerning the faith: of whom is Hymenæus and Alexander; whom I delivered unto Satan, that they might be taught not to blaspheme." For Timothy's warning, Paul points to the heretics. Instead of holding faith and a good conscience, these thrust away from them the latter, as men, with a certain violence, put away something that is disagreeable. Their truest friend they thrust aside, as they would a troublesome creditor. The result was, that they made shipwreck of their faith. Throwing away all that was needed to direct them, all that served as chart, compass, rudder,

they made shipwreck of themselves concerning faith in Christ, thus coming short of eternal life. How disastrous, especially for those who seemed to make a fair start in the voyage of life! The teaching of the apostle is suggestive regarding the causes of heresy. "As unbelief nearly always leads to grosser or more refined immorality, so not rarely it begins from an immoral ground, at least when faith existed before (Rom. i. 21). This is a deep mental truth; for it is far too common to represent faith or infidelity as a matter of abstract opinion." Earnestness in life leads to correct opinion (John vii. 17), whereas moral indifference makes it for our interest to doubt. Heresies have a secret moral genesis which will one day be made plain. Two notable heretics are mentioned here—Hymenæus and Alexander. In 2 Tim. ii. 17 Hymenæus is associated with Philetus in this, that their teaching did eat like a cancer. He and Alexander (not the coppersmith of 2 Tim. iv. 14) are here referred to as having been *delivered unto Satan*. This seems strong language to us who have nothing to impress us in the shape of such apostolic discipline in our time. It is properly regarded as "a form of Christian excommunication, declaring the person to be reduced to the state of a heathen, accompanied with the authoritative infliction of bodily disease or death." In this case the infliction of punishment was with a view to reformation. There was nothing to hinder their being received back into the Christian Church. Their probation was not at an end; there was reason for further dealing, and what was suitable to their case was the hard dealing here referred to. Better that men should be excommunicated—with which power the Church is still invested—better that men should have disease sent upon them, than that they should remain in a state of religious indifference or be spreaders of error.—R. F.

EXPOSITION.

CHAPTER II.

Ver. 1.—*First of all, that for that, first of all, A.V.; thanksgivings for and giving of thanks, A.V. I exhort therefore.* The insertion of the connecting particle "therefore" marks that this arrangement of Church prayers is a part—as the following words, first of all, mark that it is the first part—of that charge or administration which was now committed to Timothy. Supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings (see the Prayer for the Church Militant). The question naturally arises whether the first words here used—*δέησεις, προσευχάς*, and *ἐντεύξεις*—have any distinctive meaning, or are merely accumulated, like synonyms in legal documents, or various phrases in rhetorical addresses, to ensure completeness and to add force. It is against the notion of any distinctive meaning attaching to them that no such distinction can be supported by actual use. In Phil. iv. 6 two of the words (*προσευχή* and *δέησις*) are used in conjunction as here with *εὐχαρίστητα*, with no apparent difference, both being the way of making known their requests to God (so also Eph. vi. 18 and ch. v. 5). Again, in the ancient Liturgies, the words *δέσθαι* and *προσεύχεσθαι* are constantly used of the same prayer. It may, however, perhaps be said that every *δέησις* is a *προσευχή*, though every *προσευχή* is not a *δέησις*. The *δέησις* is a "petition"—a distinct asking something of God, which a *προσευχή* need not necessarily be. It may

be merely an act of adoration, of confession, of recital of God's mercies, and so on. So as regards *ἐντεύξεις*, here rendered "intercessions." There is nothing in the etymology or in the use of this word, which only occurs elsewhere in the New Testament in ch. iv. 5, to limit the meaning of it to "intercession." Nor has it this meaning in the passage where it occurs in the Liturgy of St. Clement, near the close, where God is addressed as *ὁ καὶ τῶν σωπώντων ἐπιστάμενος τὰς ἐντεύξεις*, "Who understandest the petitions even of those who are silent." In 2 Macc. iv. 8 and Diod. Sic. xvi. 55 it seems to mean "a request preferred in a personal interview," which is an extension of its common meaning in classical Greek or "access," "an interview," "social intercourse," or the like. But when we turn to the use of the verb *ἐντυγχάνειν* in the New Testament, we seem to get the idea of "intercession." *Ἐντυγχάνειν τινι* is to go to some one to ask him to take action *against* or *in favour* of some third party (see Acts xxv. 24; Rom. xi. 2; viii. 27, 28, 34; Heb. vii. 25); and so Chrysostom (quoted in Steph. 'Thesaur.') explains *ἐντυχία* to be the action of one who applies to God to avenge him of those who have done him wrong. So that perhaps "intercessions" is, on the whole, the best rendering here, though an imperfect one; and would comprise the prayers for the emperor, for the Church, for the sick, travellers, slaves, captives, etc., for the bishops, clergy, and laity, etc., and such

prayers as "Turn away from us every plot (ἐπιβουλὴν) of wicked men" (Liturgy of St. Mark).

Ver. 2.—*And all for and for all, A.V.; his place for authority, A.V.; tranquil and quiet for quiet and peaceable, A.V.; gravity for honesty, A.V. For kings, etc.* The early Liturgies closely followed these directions. "Every day, both in the evening and the morning, we offer prayers for the whole world, for kings, and for all in authority" (Chrysost., *in loc.*). So in the Liturgy of St. Mark: "Preserve our king in peace, in virtue, and righteousness. . . . Subdue his enemies under him . . . incline him to peace towards us and towards thy Holy Name, that in the serenity of his reign we too may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all piety and honesty [or, 'gravity']. " In the Liturgy of St. Clement: "Let us pray for kings and those in authority, that they may be peaceably inclined toward us, and that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all piety and honesty [or, 'gravity']. " In the Liturgy of St. Chrysostom: "Let us pray for our most religious and God-protected emperors, and all their palace and court." "We offer this our reasonable service on behalf of our most faithful and Christian (φιλοχρίστων) emperors, and all their palace and court." And in the Liturgy of St. Basil: "Remember, Lord, our most religious and faithful kings . . . that in their serenity we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity. Remember, O Lord, all rulers and all in authority, and all our brethren in the palace, and the whole court." In high place (ἐν ὑπεροχῇ); elsewhere only in 1 Cor. ii. 1, where it is rendered "excellency." But in Rom. xiii. 1 we have ἐξουσίας ὑπερεχούσας, "the higher powers;" and in 1 Pet. ii. 13, τῇ βασιλεὶ ὡς ὑπερέχοντι, "the king as supreme." In 2 Macc. iii. 11 the phrase, ἀνδρὸς ἐν ὑπεροχῇ κειμένου, occurs; and in Polybius, οἱ ἐν ὑπεροχῇ ὄντες. It is often used in Polybius for "authority" or "power." That we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity. The prayer for the rulers is recommended (as was explained in the above extracts from the Liturgies) in order to obtain for Christians a tranquil life, undisturbed by persecution and molestation, in spite of their peculiar way of life. Their wish was to be allowed to live in the faith and obedience of the gospel, "in godliness and gravity," without being interfered with by the heathen magistrates. The clause in the Prayer for the Church Militant which corresponds to this is "that under her we may be godly and quietly governed." Tranquil (ἡρεμος); found only here in the New Testament. The derivatives, ἡρεμῖος, ἡρεμῶ, etc., are common in the LXX. They all apply to a still, undisturbed, life. Quiet

1. TIMOTHY.

(ἡσυχῖος); found only here and 1 Pet. iii. 4 in the New Testament, and in the LXX. in Isa. lxvi. 2. But the noun ἡσυχία and the verb ἡσυχάζειν are common. Godliness (εὐσεβεία). One of the words almost peculiar to the pastoral Epistles (ch. iii. 16; iv. 7, 8; vi. 3, 5, 6, 11; 2 Tim. iii. 5; Titus i. 1); but elsewhere only in Acts iii. 12; 2 Pet. i. 3, 6, 7; iii. 11. Cornelius was εὐσεβής, and so was one of the soldiers who waited upon him (Acts x. 2, 7). Ananias was ἀνὴρ εὐσεβής (Acts xxii. 12, T.R.). The adverb εὐσεβῶς is also peculiar to the pastoral Epistles (2 Tim. iii. 12; Titus ii. 12). Gravity (σεμνότης); so rendered also in the A.V. of ch. iii. 4 and Titus ii. 7—the only other places in the New Testament where it is found. So also the adjective σεμνός (ch. iii. 8, 11; Titus ii. 2). Elsewhere in the New Testament only in Phil. iv. 8, where it is rendered "honest" in the A.V., and "honourable" in the R.V. In classical Greek σεμνός is properly spoken of the gods, "august," "venerable," and, when applied to persons, indicates a similar quality. Here σεμνότης is the respectable, venerable, and dignified sobriety of a truly godly man.

Ver. 3.—*This for this, A.V. and T.R. Acceptable (ἀποδέκτον); only here and ch. v. 4 in the New Testament, and in one doubtful passage in Aquila's version of Cant. i. 13. Found in Plutarch. The verb ἀποδέχομαι, to receive gladly, is frequently used by St. Luke (viii. 10; Acts ii. 41, where see note; etc.). God our Saviour (see ch. i. 1 and Luke i. 47; Titus i. 3; ii. 10, 13 (perhaps); iii. 4; 2 Pet. i. 1 (perhaps); Jude 25, by which it appears that the phrase is confined to the pastoral among St. Paul's Epistles). In the Old Testament the phrase occurs frequently (see 2 Sam. xxii. 3; Ps. cvi. 21; Isa. xliii. 3; xlv. 21, etc.).*

Ver. 4.—*Willeth that all men should be saved for will have all men to be saved, A.V.; come to for to come unto, A.V. All men, etc.; to show that it is in accordance with God's will to pray for "all men" (ver. 1). (For the doctrinal statement, comp. ver. 6; Titus ii. 11; 2 Pet. iii. 9, etc.).*

Ver. 5.—*One . . . also for and one, A.V.; himself man for the man, A.V. For there is one God, etc. The connection of ideas indicated by γὰρ seems to be this: Pray to God for all men, Jews and Gentiles, barbarians, Scythians, bond and free. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of the one God, who is the God of all the nations of the earth. And God wills that all should come to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, because Jesus Christ is the One Mediator between God and all men, by whom alone men can come to the Father, and who gave himself a ransom for all. One Mediator. The term μεσίτης is only applied to*

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our Saviour in the New Testament here and in Heb. viii. 6; ix. 15; xii. 24. In the only other passage where St. Paul uses it (Gal. iii. 19, 20) it is applied to Moses the mediator of the Old Testament. In the LXX. it only occurs in Job ix. 33. Himself man. Surely an infelicitous and unnecessary change from the A.V. Even supposing that the exact construction of the sentence requires "Christ Jesus" to be taken as the subject and "man" as the predicate, the English way of expressing that sense is to say, "the man Christ Jesus." But it is very far from certain that *ἄνθρωπος*, standing as it does in opposition to *θεός*, is not the subject, and must not therefore be rendered "the man." The man. The human nature of our Lord is here insisted upon, to show how fit he is to mediate for man, as his Godhead fits him to mediate with God.

Ver. 6.—*The testimony to be borne in its own times for to be testified in due time*, A.V. *τὸ μαρτύριον καιροῖς ἰδίαις*. This phrase is somewhat obscure, and is differently explained. But the most literal rendering and the best sense seems to be: "The testimony, at its proper time, to which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle," meaning that the mediation and redemption of Jesus Christ was the subject-matter of that testimony which he Paul was appointed to bear at the proper time. *τὸ μαρτύριον εἰς ὃ* must be taken together, without any intervening stop. This accounts for the article *τὸ*. The exactly parallel place is Titus i. 1, 2, as a close comparison of the two passages will show. A further proof of the identity of thought in the two passages is the recurrence in both of the phrase, *ἐπιγνώσις ἀληθείας*. A ransom (*ἀντίλυτρον*); here only in the New Testament, but it is used perhaps by Symmachus in Ps. xlviii. 9 (xliv., A.V.), where the LXX. have *τὴν τιμὴν τῆς λυτρώσεως τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ*, following the reading *ῥπ.*, instead of *ῥπ.* as in the Hebrew text. "What means a ransom? . . . They were about to perish, but in their stead he gave his Son, and sent us as heralds to proclaim the cross" (Chrysostom). The equivalent word in the Gospels is *ἀντάλλαγμα* (Matt. xvi. 26; Mark viii. 37). *Ἀντίλυτρον* does not seem to differ materially in meaning from *λύτρον*, the common classical word for "ransom" (i.e. redemption money), and used by our Lord of his own life given as a ransom for many (Matt. xx. 28; Mark x. 45). It is the price given as an equivalent for setting free the prisoner, or sparing the forfeited life; *λυτρώω* (Luke xxiv. 21, etc.), *λύτρωσις* (Luke i. 68, etc.), *λυτρωτής* (Acts vii. 35), *ἀπολύτρωσις* (Luke xxi. 28; Rom. iii. 24, and *passim*), have all the sense of "redeem," "redemption," and the like. In its own times. The notion of a time specially appointed for Christ's

coming into the world is frequently dwelt upon in Scripture; e.g. Gal. iv. 4; Eph. i. 10; Heb. i. 2 (comp. Acts xvii. 30, 31; 2 Cor. vi. 2). (See the same phrase, ch. vi. 15.)

Ver. 7.—*Was appointed for am ordained*, A.V.; *truth for truth in Christ*, A.V. and T.R.; *I lie for and lie*, A.V.; *truth for verity*, A.V. I was appointed, etc. It is quite in St. Paul's manner thus to refer to his own apostolic mission (see Rom. i. 5; xi. 13; xv. 16; 1 Cor. i. 1, 17; iii. 10; 2 Cor. v. 18; Gal. i. 1, etc.; Eph. iii. 2, 8; and many other places). A preacher (*κῆρυξ*; as in 2 Tim. i. 11). So Mark xvi. 15, "Preach the gospel" is *κηρύσσετε τὸ εὐαγγέλιον*; and in ver. 20, "They . . . preached everywhere" is *ἔκηρυξαν πανταχοῦ*; and 2 Tim. iv. 2, "Preach the word" is *κηρύξον τὸν λόγον*; and generally it is the word rendered "preach." It combines the idea of authority in the preacher who is the authorized herald (Rom. x. 15), and publicity for his message (Matt. x. 27; Luke xii. 3). I speak the truth, etc. The reason for this strong asseveration of his office as the apostle of the Gentiles is not at first sight apparent. But it was probably made in view of the antagonism of the Judaizing teachers referred to in ch. i. 3, 19, 20 (comp. Rom. xi. 13; xv. 15, 16).

Ver. 8.—*Desire for will*, A.V.; *the men for men*, A.V.; *in every place for everywhere*, A.V.; *disputing for doubting*, A.V. I desire, etc. He takes up the subject again which he had opened in ver. 1, but had somewhat digressed from in vers. 4-7, and gives further directions as to the persons who are to make the prayers spoken of in ver. 1, viz. *men* (*τοὺς ἄνδρας*), not women, as it follows more at large in vers. 9-15. The stress is clearly upon "men" (or, "the men" — it makes no difference); and there is no force in Alford's remark that in that case it would have been *τοὺς ἄνδρας προσεύχεσθαι*. The prayers had been already ordered in ver. 1; the additional detail, that they were to be offered by men, is now added. In every place; not, as Chrysostom thinks, in contrast to the Jewish worship, which was confined to the temple at Jerusalem, but merely meaning wherever a Christian congregation is assembled. Lifting up holy hands. Alford quotes Clem. Rom. "To the Corinthians," Ep. i. ch. 29: *προσέλθωμεν . . . ἐν δαδότητι ψυχῆς ἀγνῆς καὶ ἀμείαντους χεῖρας ἀρπυντες πρὸς αὐτόν* (comp. Ps. xxvi. 6; xxviii. 2; xliii. 20; lxiii. 4; 2 Chron. vi. 12, 13). Without wrath. It appears from several passages in Chrysostom that the habit of praying angry prayers was not unknown in his day. "Do you pray against your brother? But your prayer is not against him, but against yourself. You provoke God by uttering those impious words, 'Show him the same'; 'So do to him'; 'Smite him'; 'Recompense him'; . . . and

much more to the same effect" ('Hom.' vi.). In 'Hom.' viii. his comment on this passage is: "Without bearing malice. . . Let no one approach God in enmity, or in an unamiable temper." And disputing (*διαλογισμοῦ*). The exact meaning of *διαλογισμός* is perhaps best seen in Luke v. 21, 22, where both the verb and the substantive are used. The *διαλογισμοί* are cavillings, questionings proceeding from a captious, unbelieving spirit. They are *διαλογισμοί πονηροί* (Matt. xv. 19). The word is always used in a bad-sense in the New Testament. Forms of prayer were not yet established in the Church, but these cautions show the need of them.

Ver. 9.—*In like manner for in like manner also, A.V. and T.R.; braided for broided, A.V.; and gold for or gold, A.V.; raiment for array, A.V.* The apostle here passes on to the duties of women as members of the congregation, and he places first modesty of demeanour and dress, the contrary to these being likely to prove a hurt and a hindrance to their fellow-worshippers. Adorn themselves in modest apparel. This is obviously the true construction, *κοσμεῖν* depending upon *βούλομαι*. There is a little doubt as to the exact meaning of *καταστολή* here, the only place where it occurs in the New Testament. Alford argues strongly in favour of the meaning, "apparel." But it may also mean "steadiness" or "quietness" of demeanour; and then the phrase will be exactly parallel to 1 Pet. iii. 5, "The incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit." And the meaning will be, "Let Christian women adorn themselves with a decent and well-ordered quietness of demeanour, in strict accordance with [or, 'together with'] shamefastness and sobriety [*μετά*, 'in strict accord with,' or 'together with'] not with braided hair," etc. A woman's true ornament is not the finery which she gets from the milliner, but the chaste discretion which she has from the Spirit of God. Modest (*κόσμιος*); only found in the New Testament here and in ch. iii. 2, where it is rendered "of good behaviour" in the A.V., and "modest" in the margin, "orderly" in the R.V. It is common in classical Greek in the sense of "well-ordered," "well-behaved." Shamefastness (*αἰδώς*, bashfulness). So the edition of 1611; "shamefacedness" in the later editions is a corruption. Archbishop Trench compares "steadfast," "soothfast," "rootfast," "masterfast," "footfast," "bedfast," with their substantives ('Synonyms of New Test.,' § xx.). Sobriety (*σωφροσύνη*, as in ver. 15, *q.v.*); soundness, health, purity, and integrity of mind. *Ἀπὸ τοῦ σώας τὰς ψυχὰς ἔχειν* (Chrysostom, 'Ap. Trench.'). Braided hair (*πλεγμῶν*); found only here in the New Testament, but used in Aquila and Theodotion, instead of the *πλεκεῖς* or *πλακεῖς* of the

LXX., in Isa. xxviii. 5, for *πλεξ*, a "diadem," or "twined garland." In classical Greek *πλέγματα* are anything twined, tendrils of the vine, wickerwork, chaplets, etc. The corresponding word in 1 Pet. iii. 3 is *ἐμπλοκή τριχῶν*, "plaiting the hair." Costly raiment (*ἱματισμὸ πολυτελεῖ*). For *ἱματισμός*, comp. Luke vii. 25; ix. 29; Acts xx. 33; Ps. xlv. 10, LXX.; etc., which show that the word is used *κατ' ἐξοχήν* of any splendid garment (Schleusner). Πολυτελής, costly (see Mark xiv. 3; 1 Pet. iii. 4, and frequently in the LXX.). St. Peter manifestly had this passage before him, from the marked verbal coincidences, as well as close similarity of thought (*ἐμπλοκή, χρύσιον, κόσμος, ἱμάτιον, πολυτελής, ἀγαθοποιούσαι* (compared with *δι' ἔργων ἀγαθῶν*), *ἡσυχία, ὑποταγή*, (compared with *ὑποτασσόμεναι*), *ἀγλαί γυναῖκες, κ.τ.λ.* (compared with *ἐπαγγελλόμεναι θεοσέβειαν*). (See reference to St. Paul's Epistles in 2 Pet. iii. 15.)

Ver. 10.—*Through for with, A.V.* (The change from "with" to "through" is quite unnecessary, though more strictly accurate. "With" does equally well for *ἐν* and *διὰ*, the one applied to the ornaments and dress *in* or *with* which the woman adorns herself, the other to the good works *by* which she is adorned.) Professing godliness. In all other passages in the New Testament where it occurs, *ἐπαγγέλλεσθαι* means "to promise," except in ch. vi. 21, where, as here, it means "to profess," as it frequently does in classical Greek: *Ἐπαγγέλλεσθαι ἀρετήν, σοφίαν, etc.* Θεοσεβεία only occurs here in the New Testament; but it is used in the LXX., in Job xxviii. 28; Gen. xx. 11; also in Xenophon. In John ix. 31 we have Θεοσεβής, "a worshipper of God." Through good works. Compare the description of Dorcas (Acts ix. 36, 39). *Ἔργα ἀγαθὰ* mean especially acts of charity (comp. ch. v. 10; 2 Cor. ix. 8, 9; Col. i. 11; elsewhere it is used more generally, like *ἔργα καλὰ*, though this phrase also sometimes points especially to acts of charity, as in ch. v. 10; vi. 18; Titus iii. 14; Heb. x. 24).

Ver. 11.—*A for the, A.V.; quietness for silence, A.V.* Quietness is not so good a rendering as "silence," because the *quietness* here meant is *silence*, as appears clearly by the parallel direction in 1 Cor. xiv. 34. So Acts xxii. 2, *παρέσχον ἡσυχίαν* is properly rendered in the A.V., "They kept silence." And *ἡσύχασαν* (Luke xiv. 4 and Acts xi. 18) is rendered, both in the A.V. and the R.V., "They held their peace." With all subjection (*ἐν πάρῃ ὑποταγῇ*); as ch. iii. 4. The words occur also in 2 Cor. ix. 13; Gal. ii. 5. But the verb *ὑποτάσσεσθαι* is very common in the sense of "being subject." It is used of the subjection of the wife to her husband (1 Cor. xiv. 34; Eph.

v. 22; Col. iii. 18; Titus ii. 5; 1 Pet. iii. 1).

Ver. 12.—*Permit for suffer*, A.V.; *have dominion for usurp authority*, A.V.; *a for the*, A.V.; *quietness for silence*, A.V. Permit. Why "permit" is better than "suffer" it is difficult to see. Ἐπιτρέπειν is rendered "suffer" in the R.V. in Matt. viii. 21; xix. 8; Mark x. 4; Luke ix. 59, etc. Quietness (see preceding note). The true type of the womanly attitude is that of Mary, who "sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his Word" (Luke x. 39).

Ver. 13.—*Was formed* (ἐπλάσθη). The word used in the LXX. in Gen. ii. 7, Ἐπλασεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον, κ.τ.λ., "The Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground;" and in Gen. ii. 19 of the beasts of the field; whence the word πρωτόπλαστος (Wisd. vii. 1; x. 1), "first made," "first formed," A.V. So in Rom. ix. 20 man is called τὸ πλάσμα, "the thing made;" and God is ὁ πλάσας, "he that made it" "Plaster," "plastic," "protoplasm," are, of course, from the same root. (For the argument, see the very similar one in 1 Cor. xi. 8, 9.)

Ver. 14.—*Beguiled* (twice) *for deceived*, A.V.; *hath fallen into for was in the*, A.V. *Beguiled* (ἡπαρήθη). The same word as is used in Gen. iii. 13, "The serpent beguiled me;" ἡπάτησέ με, LXX. (comp. 2 Cor. xi. 8, where the verb used is ἐξηπάτησεν). *Hath fallen into transgression*. *Fell* (not *hath fallen*) is the right tense to use here in English, though the Greek perfect, it is true, contains the further idea of *continuance* in the fall, as in 1 Cor. ix. 22; xiii. 11; 1 Thess. ii. 1; 2 Pet. ii. 20. So also Matt. i. 22; xix. 8; xxi. 4; xxv. 6; Mark v. 33; John i. 3; 2 Cor. i. 19; and elsewhere, γέγονε is best rendered by the past (not the perfect) tense. It has frequently the notion of transition into a certain condition (see Rom. vi. 5; vii. 13; 1 Cor. ix. 22; xiii. 11; 2 Cor. v. 17; xii. 11; Gal. iv. 16, etc.). Bishop Ellicott gives the passages in which γίγνομαι is followed, as here, by ἐν (Luke xxii. 44; Acts xxii. 17; 2 Cor. iii. 7; 1 Thess. ii. 5), "denoting entrance into, and continuance in, any given state." As regards the apostle's statement, *Adam was not beguiled*, we must understand it as based merely upon the text in Genesis to which he refers, in which Eve (not Adam)

says, Ὁ ὄφις ἡπάτησε με, "The serpent beguiled me." Just as in Gal. iii. 16 he reasons from σπέρματι being in the singular number, and as the writer to the Hebrews (vii. 3) reasons from the *silence* of Gen. xiv. regarding the parentage of Melchizedek. Huther (*in loc.*) says that this mode of reasoning is peculiar to allegorical interpretation.

Ver. 15.—*But for notwithstanding*, A.V.; *through the child-bearing for in child-bearing*, A.V.; *love for charity*, A.V.; *sanctification for holiness*, A.V. She shall be saved; i.e. *the woman* generically. The transition from the personal *Eve* to the generic *woman* is further marked by the transition from the singular to the plural, "if they continue," etc. The natural and simple explanation of the passage is that the special temporal punishment pronounced against the woman, immediately after her sin, "In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children" (Gen. iii. 16)—(to which St. Paul here evidently alludes)—and endured by all women ever since, was a set-off, so to speak, to the special guilt of Eve in yielding to the guile of the serpent; so that now the woman might attain salvation as well as the man (although she was not suffered to teach) if she continued in faith and charity. The child-bearing (τῆς τεκνογονίας); here only; but the verb τεκνογονέω, which occurs in ch. v. 14, is found (though very rarely) in classical Greek. The equivalent, both in the LXX. and in classical Greek, is τεκνοποιέω. The reference to the birth of Christ—the Seed of the woman—which some commentators (Hammond, Peile, Wordsworth, Ellicott, etc.; not Bengel, Alford, or the German school generally) see here, is rather strained, and anyhow cannot be proved without an inspired interpreter. The stress which is laid by some of the above on the use of the definite article here has no justification (see e.g. 2 Pet. i. 5—7, where even the R.V. does not think of translating "the virtue," "the knowledge," "the temperance," etc.). Nor is the meaning of διὰ, which Alford and others press, "through," i.e. "in spite of," like διὰ πυρός in 1 Cor. iii. 15, at all probable from the context. Sanctification (ἀγιασμός; Rom. vi. 19; 1 Thess. iv. 3, etc.). Sobriety (σωφροσύνη); as in ver. 9. It only occurs besides in Acts xxvi. 25.

HOMILETICS.

Vers. 1—15.—*Public worship*. The whole chapter is given up to directions concerning the public worship of the Church. We may notice the following particulars.

I. THE SUBJECTS OF PUBLIC PRAYER. When the Church meets together in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, it meets as pre-eminently the friend of the human race. As the Church of him who is the world's Saviour and Redeemer, it must manifest the same spirit of universal love which animated him. It is not as being haters of the

human race (as their enemies falsely said), but as being true lovers of their kind, that Christians banded themselves together and refused all fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. This love, then, was especially to be shown in their united prayers. When they came together, though perhaps their enemies were thirsting for their blood, they were to offer up their united prayers for all men. Specially, with a view to the peace and order of society, should they pray for kings and governors and all in authority, that by God's blessing upon their government the course of this world might be so peaceably ordered that his Church might serve him joyfully in all godly quietness. And if we consider how much human happiness depends upon good government on the part of the rulers, and upon quiet obedience to the laws on the part of the people, we shall see how much need there is for such prayers. In our own days the restless spirit that is abroad, the impatience of all control, and the general weakening of rule and authority all over the world, increases the need both of wisdom and strength in rulers, and consequently for the strengthening of their hands by the prayers and intercessions of the people of God.

II. THE PERSONS WHO ARE TO PRAY IN THE CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLIES. These are limited to the men. The prayers and the teaching in the congregation are to be conducted by men only. The difference of sex, and the different social and religious functions of each sex, are really of Divine appointment. As St. Paul says to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xi. 9), "the woman was made for the man, and not the man for the woman;" and all the subsequent relations of the man and woman, in the family, in the state, and in the Church, are naturally evolved from their primeval state as ordered by God. It is obvious, too, that there must be harmony in these various relations, and that the principle which rules in one department of life must rule in the others also. Anyhow, it is distinctly laid down, on the apostolic authority of St. Paul, that in the Church assemblies the functions of public prayer, and public teaching and preaching, are confined to men. The wide field of more private female ministrations is still open to godly women, and seems to be amply justified by the existence of prophetesses in the primitive Church, and by such examples as that of Priscilla (Acts xviii. 26). As regards the character of the men who lead the prayers of the congregation, three qualifications are named: holiness, quietness of spirit, simplicity in the petitions. The hands that are lifted up to God in prayer must be clean hands, unstained by blood, untainted by bribes or dishonest gains, unpolluted by any evil deeds. The prayers that are offered must come from hearts where no malice or ill will dwells, no resentment for wrongs received or injuries endured; and from minds where the spirit of controversy is dumb, and no cavilling is to be found. Sincerity and godly simplicity, with an honest faith in the faithfulness of God, are essential to acceptable prayer.

III. The third feature in the public assemblies of the saints on which St. Paul insists is THE MODEST DRESS AND DEMEANOUR OF THE CONGREGATION. This applies especially to the women, but it is true of the men also. Christians come to church to worship the glorious God, to humble themselves before his holy presence, and to hear his Word, not for display, not to attract notice, not for vain-glory or worldly vanity. It is, therefore, quite out of place for either men or women to make a parade of finery in church. The ornaments best suited for persons professing godliness at all times, but especially when they approach the throne of God, are those of a pure heart and a meek spirit, and an abundance of good works. It is the hidden man of the heart which needs adorning for its access to the court of heaven.

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Ver. 1.—*The regulation of public worship.* The apostle gives Timothy a series of injunctions respecting the assemblies for public worship, which sprang naturally out of the solemn charge he had given him in the previous chapter.

I. THE PARAMOUNT DUTY OF PUBLIC PRAYER. "I exhort therefore, first of all, that petitions, prayers, supplications, thanksgivings, be made for all men." 1. *The leading place given to prayer in this series of instructions respecting the administration of the Church, proves its pre-eminent importance.* It is the breath of vital godliness (1) God promises to hear public prayer (2 Chron. vii. 14—16); (2) Christ sanctifies it

by his presence (Matt. xviii. 20); (3) the saints delight in it (Ps. xlii. 4); (4) they are to be exhorted to the exercise of it (Heb. x. 25); (5) it is not to be conducted in an unknown tongue (1 Cor. xiv. 14—16). 2. *The variety of terms in which it is here described implies the diversity of circumstances in which God's people are placed.* (1) "Petitions." This term expresses the sense of insufficiency and need, and may be a special form of a particular prayer. (2) "Prayers." This is prayer in general, as representing the spirit of devotion. (3) "Supplications." This signifies a closer dealing with God, a more childlike confidence in prayer. (4) "Thanksgivings." This suggests that element which ought never to be absent from our supplications—gratitude for past mercies.

II. FOR WHOM ARE WE TO PRAY? "For all men." 1. *It would not be acceptable prayer if we were to pray only for ourselves.* It is not Christ-like to look down with a sense of superiority upon the mass of men as sunk in perdition. 2. *We are bound to love all men, and therefore to pray for their welfare.* Much of our happiness depends upon our identifying ourselves lovingly with others.

III. PRAYERS ARE SPECIALLY TO BE MADE FOR KINGS AND ALL IN HIGH PLACE. "For kings and for all in high place." 1. *Such persons pre-eminently need our prayers.* (1) They wield great power for good or evil; (2) they are exposed to many dangers; (3) they are liable to greater temptations than other men. 2. *God has power to influence their public action.* (1) The hearts of kings are in his hands; (2) he sets them up and he removes them (Dan. ii. 21); (3) he can establish their throne in righteousness and justice (Prov. xvi. 12). 3. *Kings can do much to promote the well-being of the Church of God.* "That we may pass a quiet and tranquil life in all godliness and gravity." We should pray for kings, because they can promote our outward peace and our inward tranquillity, by restraining the bad and encouraging the good. Kings can thus protect us in the exercise of our religion and in the practice of godliness. Wicked kings can expose the godly to cruel risks, and expose their gravity to unseemly perils. 4. *The duty of praying for kings is not affected by the consideration that they are pagans, or oppressors, or persecutors.* (1) Christians will pray the more earnestly for them that God will change their hearts. All the kings were pagans in the days of the apostle, and many of them persecutors. (2) It was specially necessary to enjoin prayer for kings upon Christian communities, consisting largely of Jews who had an intense longing to throw off the Roman yoke. It is a curious fact that it was the cessation of prayer by the Jews on behalf of the Roman emperor that led to the final war four years after this injunction was given by the apostle. It may have been owing to his injunction that the Christians were not involved in the disasters of that fatal rebellion.—T. C.

Vers. 3, 4.—*The beneficial and acceptable nature of such catholic prayer.* "For this is good and acceptable before God our Saviour."

I. SUCH PRAYER FOR ALL SORTS OF MEN IS GOOD. It is good: 1. *Because it springs from a good motive, a loving interest in our fellow-men.* 2. *Because it is directed to a good end, the promotion of their highest welfare.* 3. *Because it is a divinely commanded duty.*

II. SUCH PRAYER IS ACCEPTABLE BEFORE GOD OUR SAVIOUR. It meets God's highest approval because it is in accordance with his own gracious designs toward the sons of men.

III. REASON OR GROUND FOR THIS UNIVERSALITY OF OUR PUBLIC PRAYERS. It is good and acceptable "before God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth." He wills that all men should be saved, therefore we should pray for all men. Our prayers will thus be in conformity with his will. 1. *Consider the nature of the salvation here described.* (1) It is not mere salvation from intellectual error, for it is that which is involved in "the full knowledge of the truth." (2) It is not mere salvability, as if he made the salvation of all men possible. (3) It is not salvation merely offered for man's acceptance, but salvation actually obtained and enjoyed. The immediate end is "the knowledge of the truth," the ultimate end salvation in its completeness. 2. *Consider the relation of the Divine will to this salvation.* "Who will have all men to be saved." (1) There is nothing in the language to justify the theory of Universalists that all men will ultimately be saved. (a) The apostle uses

the term *θέλει*, not the stronger term *βουλέται*, which implies will with a purpose or intent. (b) If he had used the term *σῶσαι*, he must have saved all; but the word is *σωθῆναι*, implying his will that they should be brought, through the knowledge of the truth, to salvation. (c) If we are to interpret the will of God by his providence, we must understand it in consistency with the fact that the large majority of mankind have never heard of salvation and have no knowledge of it. (d) It must be remembered that many must have failed to reach this salvation before Christ died at all. (2) The language of universality is consistent with other language of Scripture. (a) Christ says, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me" (John xii. 32); "All men shall see the salvation of the Lord" (Luke iii. 6). The Messiah "shall pour out his Spirit upon all flesh" (Joel ii. 28). Christ "died for all," and he may therefore be truly called *Salvator hominum*. He died for all to arrest the immediate execution of the sentence of the Law upon man for sin; to obtain for him unnumbered blessings in this life, that he might secure a proper foundation for the offer of salvation through his blood. (b) But the design of God in the death of Christ had not the same relation to all. He is "the Saviour of all, but especially of them that believe." He is the Saviour of his people, of his Church, of the elect. (c) The language of universality used in the passage was suggested by way of contrast to the restrictiveness of Gnostic teaching, which led the apostle to say to the Colossians that his aim was "to present every man perfect in Christ" (Col. i. 28); perhaps, likewise, the restrictiveness of a narrow Judaism, for he emphasizes in the context his mission as "a teacher of the Gentiles." There is deep mystery in God's counsels. But he here sets forth his good will to man, and charges it on the conscience of believers to pray that all without exception should be brought to the knowledge of the truth.—T. C.

Vers. 5—7.—*Reasons for this universality of prayer in the relation of all men to God and Christ.* "For there is one God, one Mediator also between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus." The salvation of men cannot, therefore, be to us a matter of selfish indifference.

I. THE RELATION OF ALL MEN TO GOD. The unity of God is consistent with all differences of dispensation. "There is one providence belonging to the one God." The apostle tells the Romans that, "as God is one," he is the God of the Gentiles as well as the Jews (Rom. iii. 30). There is, indeed, "one God and Father of all" (Eph. iv. 4, 5). The apostle also says, "The mediator" (Moses) "is not of one"—one seed, *i.e.* including Jew and Gentile, for Moses had nothing to do with the Gentile—"but God is one," in relation to Jew and Gentile (Gal. iii. 20). In these passages the apostle sets forth the universality of the gospel offer. But in the text he infers the universality of the Divine good will from the provisions made for man's salvation.

II. THE RELATION OF ALL MEN TO THE MEDIATOR. "One Mediator also between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus." 1. *There is but one Mediator.* The Gnostic mediation of angels is, therefore, excluded (Col. ii. 15, 18). Likewise the mediation of saints and angels, as held by the Church of Rome. This idea is dishonouring to the only Mediator. There is no Scripture for the distinction made between a mediator of redemption (Christ) and mediators of intercession (saints and angels). 2. *The Mediator was man as well as God.* (1) He was truly man, in opposition to the Docetic notion that he did not possess a real human nature. (2) He was God as well as man in his Mediatorship, in opposition to the Roman Catholic theory that he only mediated in his human nature. The design of this error is to make way for human mediators. It is said to be absurd to conceive of Christ as God mediating between sinners and himself. (a) We answer that the Divine nature operated in Christ's priestly work as well as the human, for "he through the eternal Spirit" (his own Spirit) "offered himself to God" (Heb. ix. 14). (b) If he did not mediate in his Divine nature as well as his human nature, he could not have been in any sense Mediator of the Old Testament saints, because their redemption was completed before he came in the flesh. The human nature is naturally emphasized because of the work of suffering and death which is here ascribed to him. 3. *The passage does not imply that Christ was not God.* He is elsewhere frequently called God and true God, but here there is a necessary reference to the catholic doctrine of a subordination of office. 4. *The reference to the mediatorship brings up the idea of a covenant between God and man.* Christ is the Head of humanity,

the new Man, the Lord from heaven, able to restore the lost relationship between God and man. 5. *The mediatory agency is wrought through Christ's sufferings and death.* "Who gave himself a Ransom for all." (1) This proves that all the blessings of redemption come from the death of Christ, not merely from his incarnation. (2) He voluntarily gave himself as the Victim, yet he is "God's unspeakable Gift." (3) His death was strictly substitutionary. The words of the apostle resemble those of our Lord himself—"he gave himself a Ransom for many" (Matt. xx. 28). He was thus the Substitute contemplated by the apostle as the Messiah who had obtained from the Father the heritage of all families and nations of the earth, not Jews alone, but Gentiles.

III. THE TRUE PURPOSE OF THE GOSPEL MESSAGE. "The testimony to be borne in its own times." 1. *Thus the death of Christ is the great message to be carried to all the world.* It is not his birth, or his example, or his truth, but, above all, what is the completion of them all—his death on Calvary. 2. *It is to be preached in all times till the second coming of the Lord.* 3. *The apostle's own relation to this testimony.* "Whereunto I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I speak the truth, I lie not); a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth." Thus the universality of the remedial scheme is represented by the very mission of the apostle himself. He was "a herald" to proclaim the glad tidings here; "an apostle"—let men say what they will, he is an apostle, therefore the surpassing importance of his message—and "a teacher of the Gentiles"—to mark the world-embracing character of his gospel—"in faith and truth," to signalize respectively the subjective and the objective elements in which his apostleship was to find its appropriate sphere.—T. C.

Vers. 8.—*The conduct of public prayer by men.* The apostle now proceeds to indicate the persons by whom public prayer is to be conducted, and the spirit which is to govern this part of public worship.

I. PRAYER IN THE CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLIES IS TO BE CONDUCTED BY MEN. "I wish then that prayer be made in every place by men." 1. *It is for men to manage and direct the public services of the Church;* it is for women to take a more quiet though not less real place in worship. As woman had been emancipated by the gospel—for there were no longer "male and female" in Christ—and as she had taken such a prominent place in ministering to Christ, the apostles, and the saints, there may have been a disposition on the part of female converts to assert themselves actively in the public life of the Church at Ephesus and elsewhere. The apostle expresses not a mere wish or desire, but, what is equivalent to a solemn command, that the men alone should be responsible for the conduct of the public services. The injunction does not affect the right or duty of women to conduct prayer in private life or in meetings of their own sex. 2. *Prayer is to be made in every place.* This rule is to obtain in all public assemblies of the saints, wherever held. There is, perhaps, a recollection of our Lord's words that there is to be no restriction of prayer to one holy place (John iv. 21).

II. THE SPIRIT AND MANNER IN WHICH PUBLIC PRAYER IS TO BE CONDUCTED. "Lifting up holy hands without wrath or disputing." 1. *The posture must be reverent.* It was customary for the Jews to pray with uplifted hands. It was likewise the general attitude adopted by the early Christians. It was the attitude significant (1) of the elevation of the heart to God; (2) of the expectation of an answer from heaven. 2. *The uplifted hands must be holy.* They must be hands unstained by vice. "Cleanse your hands, purify your hearts" (Jas. iv. 8). The hands must be free from any sin that would render prayer unacceptable to God. "Wash you, make you clean" (Isa. i. 16). 3. *Prayer should be free from all passionate feeling.* "Without wrath and disputing." Perhaps arising from religious altercation or debate. Prayer belongs to the peaceful heart. Faith and love are its two sustaining principles, and exclude the idea of passion against our fellow-men.—T. C.

Vers. 9, 10.—*The attire and deportment of women in the Christian assemblies.* The apostle continues his directions in relation to public prayer. "Likewise," he says, in effect, "let women when they pray be modestly adorned."

I. THEIR APPAREL AND DEPORTMENT. "Likewise also that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness and sobriety; not with braided hair, and gold, and pearls, and costly raiment." 1. *The injunction refers specially to the dress of*

women in the Christian assemblies, which ought not to be showy or conspicuous, calculated either to swell the heart of the wearer with pride, or to attract the eyes of others in forgetfulness of the solemnity of public worship. 2. *While adornment is expressly allowed, according to age and station*, to the exclusion of anything slovenly, there must be nothing in the attire or deportment inconsistent with modesty, self-restraint, or Christian simplicity. There must be no excessive care bestowed upon the adjustment of the hair, and no adornment with gold, or pearls, or costly array inconsistent with the attire previously recommended. Plaiting the hair may be the most convenient way of arranging it, and wearing ornaments is no more sinful in itself than wearing apparel. The injunction is that women should not seek such adornments as would either endanger piety or draw away their affections from higher things.

II. THE TRUE ADORNMENT OF WOMEN. "But (which becometh women professing godliness) through good works." 1. *Religion is external as well as internal*. There is the form which must be clothed with the power of godliness; religion must not be secret, but manifest to the world. Therefore women must profess the Christian name, and take part in the worship of the Church. 2. *There must be a harmony between the profession of godliness and those deeds of mercy and piety* which, Dorcas-like, show the true disciple of Jesus. 3. *The highest distinction of women does not spring from dress or decoration*, but from the lustre that is thrown round their character by works of goodness. They will thus "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour" (Titus ii. 10). —T. C.

Vers. 11—15.—*The proper sphere and behaviour of women*. The apostle is still thinking of the public services of the Church.

I. THE WOMAN IS FORBIDDEN TO TEACH OR PREACH IN THE CHURCH. "Let a woman learn in silence in all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to lord it over the man, but to be in silence." This injunction has a threefold relation—first to herself, then to her husband, then to the Church. 1. *She is to learn in silence*. This duty concerns herself. She is to be a learner, not a teacher. She is to give all devout attention to the public instruction, so as to learn more and more of Christ and his gospel. And if what she heard was either difficult or doubtful, she was to ask her husband at home (1 Cor. xiv. 34); and, in case of his inability to meet her difficulties, she could resort privately to the authorized teachers of the Church. This learning attitude was to be "in all subjection" both to her husband and to the rulers of the Church. Yet it did not imply that she was to accept false teaching, or forego her just right to prove all things and reject what was unsound. 2. *She is not to lord it over the man*. As teaching or preaching is the act of those in authority, her assumption of this function would imply a lordship over her husband. Husband and wife are "heirs together of the grace of life," but the gospel has not exalted woman to a position of authority over her husband. 3. *She is not to teach in the Church*. (1) This injunction of the apostle does not forbid her teaching privately, either her children, as Timothy was taught by his mother, or her servants, or the younger women (Titus ii. 4), or even her husband privately on fit occasions, or even strangers, as Priscilla taught Apollos (Acts xviii. 26). (2) It forbids her teaching in public. (a) It is suggestive that the words usually translated in the New Testament "to preach" (κηρύσσω, εὐαγγελίζω, καταγγέλλω) are not used in connection with this prohibition, as if women were merely forbidden to preach, but still allowed to teach. The word used here is "to teach" (διδάσκω), and the word used in 1 Cor. xiv. (λαλέω)—"to talk, chatter, babble"—is even more comprehensive. These words all include preaching as the greater includes the less; therefore preaching is also forbidden to women. (b) Prophesying was forbidden to women as well as teaching. This was a supernatural gift enjoyed both by men and women in the primitive Church, but is not enjoyed now by either men or women. It is never in the New Testament used for preaching, or for mere speaking in meeting. But were there not women who prophesied in the Corinthian Church? (1 Cor. xi. 4, 5.) (a) The gift of prophecy being connected with the gift of tongues, and both being now obsolete, the title of women to the exercise of such a gift in this age utterly fails. (b) The apostle, in his discussion concerning prophecy and the gift of tongues, forbids women to speak at all in the Churches (1 Cor. xiv.). It was in the very midst of his injunctions respecting the use of supernatural gifts that he says, "As

in all Churches of the saints, let your women keep silence in the Churches, for it is not permitted to them to speak . . . for it is a shame for women to speak in the Churches." Prophesying as well as preaching is forbidden to women. (7) Much unnecessary difficulty has been caused by the passage respecting "a woman praying or prophesying with her head uncovered" (1 Cor. xi. 5). The apostle seems for the time to allow the practice, while he condemns the manner of its performance; but afterwards he forbids the practice itself. In the earlier passage he rebukes merely the indecency of an existing custom, and then in the later he forbids the custom itself. Calvin says, "By condemning the one he does not commend the other." You cannot regard as of equal authority a practice and a command, both explicit and repeated, which destroys the practice. (8) "But these directions were given to Greek Churches, and cannot apply to the women of our day." We answer that they apply to all Churches; for the apostle says, "As in all Churches of the saints, let your women keep silence in the Churches." The reasons given for the prohibition prove that it has nothing to do with usages, or customs, or times, or races.

II. THE REASON OR GROUND OF THE APOSTLE'S PROHIBITION. It is to be found in the original law of the relation of woman to man. 1. *Man's headship in creation.* "For Adam was first formed, then Eve." Man's priority of creation is the first reason, but it is to be taken together with the statement in 1 Cor. xi. 8, 9, "For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man; for also the man was not made for the sake of the woman, but the woman for the sake of the man." Besides, as "the Head of every man is Christ, the head of the woman is the man" (1 Cor. xi. 3). "The husband is the head of the wife" (Eph. v. 23). The woman, therefore, stands under law to her husband, and therefore any attempt on her part to assume the part of head or guide is to overturn the primal order of creation. 2. *Woman's priority in transgression.* "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being altogether deceived fell into transgression." They both sinned; but Adam was not deceived, for he fully understood the sin he was committing when he yielded to the persuasiveness of his wife. (1) This reference implies the truly historical character of the narrative in Genesis. It is no myth or legend. The fall of man is an historic fact of the greatest importance, for it grounds the doctrine of original sin, without which human nature, says Pascal, is an inexplicable riddle. (2) The deception was practised upon Eve, not upon Adam, for she confessed that the serpent beguiled her. (3) This facility of deception on her part seems to suggest to the apostle her inferiority to man in strength of intellect, and the consequent wrongness of allowing to woman an intellectual supremacy over man.

III. THE BLESSING UPON WOMAN STANDING WITHIN HER TRUE SPHERE. "But she shall be saved through the child-bearing, if they abide in faith and love and holiness with sobriety." 1. *It is here implied that woman is to find her right sphere in the relations of motherhood.* The change of number implies that Eve is here to be regarded as the representative of her sex. Her sphere is in the home life; her destiny lies in the faithful discharge of its duties. Eve was to be the mother of all living; it was to be through the seed thus given her that the curse was to be lifted off the world, and the head of the serpent bruised. There is an evident allusion in "the child-bearing" to the Incarnation, but it points likewise to the collective seed associated with Christ. 2. *It implies that women are not saved, as Roman Catholics contend, by mere child-bearing,* so that a woman dying in her travail is necessarily saved, for the apostle links with it certain spiritual qualifications as necessary to salvation. (1) Faith—implicitly resting in the Divine promise and upon the Divine Redeemer, "as the seed of the woman;" (2) love, as the inspiration of all her wifely and motherly duties; (3) holiness, as implying purity of life, circumspectness of walk, and devotedness to God; (4) with sobriety, as marking the self-effacing, self-restraining, self-governing spirit which she is to carry into all the conditions of her life as a Christian mother.—T. C.

Ver. 2.—"*A quiet life.*" Nothing in the gospel was revolutionary. Its aim was not to upset thrones, but to purify all the centres of power; not to make assault at once on polygamy and slavery, but to undermine them by the Christian spirit and sacrifice. Prayer is here made for kings and all in authority. Rulership there must be. Anarchy is misery. Fields must be ploughed; grain must be stored; homes must be protected; or else weakness becomes the prey of strength. The purpose, then, of God, in ordination

of law and government, is that we may enjoy a quiet life. To some a quiet life is the least desirable thing; but it is the life of nature, and it is the most blessed life. How quietly the flowers blow, the stars shine, the dew de-cends, the birds wing their flight, the light falls! 1. "*A quiet life;*" *for if there be disorder, all life is at a stand-still.* Even great artists like Gerome, during the last French Revolution, had to bury their pictures, for the time, beneath the earth. 2. "*Quiet;*" *for think of the forces around us.* We need good government to preserve us from the violent, the lewd, and the criminal. The sea of human passion is always ready to break its barriers; the volcano would soon burst through the crust. 3. "*Quiet;*" *for this is the great enjoyment of life.* Our happiest hours have been quiet ones—at home; by the river or the sea; in the valleys and in the forests; and in the Church of God. "That we may lead," which implies *continuance*; life without trepidation; absence of the disorders which check industry, prudence, and enterprise.—W. M. S.

Ver. 2.—"*A peaceable life.*" Christ said, "Peace I leave with you," and he intended this to be the element in which nations and families and individuals should live. Through faith in him, we have peace with God, peace with our brother, and peace in ourselves. The world delights in noise and tumult; fills its forums with fierce discussions and debates; hangs the pictures of Wouvermans, with their fierce battle-fields, on its walls. Some people are said to delight in strife—to be what is called "law-thirsty;" and in quiet villages, even, you meet with antagonisms that are fierce and frequent. 1. "*Peaceable;*" *for the gospel is to overcome evil with good.* To triumph, not by carnal weapons, but those that are mighty through God, and which have the secret majesty of their power in the cross. 2. "*Peaceable;*" *for passion must be governed by conscience and Christ.* Unquestionably the microscope shows us insects at war in the globe of water; and the beasts of the forest meet in deadliest conflict. But man is to triumph over himself; reason is to be lord over passion, and Christ is to be Lord over all. 3. "*Peaceable;*" *for a home without this is misery.* Where jarring and disputation are, there the atmosphere is destructive of all holy, happy life. 4. "*Peaceable;*" *for this is the end of law.* Forms of government are not all in all. Greece and Rome alike fell under the same form of government under which they rose. 5. "*Peaceable;*" *for the Prince of Peace is to reign.* He came to fulfil the angels' song, "Peace on earth, and good will to man;" and one day, by his cross, he will draw all hearts unto himself.—W. M. S.

Ver. 2.—*Moral loveliness.* "In all godliness and honesty." It may be said that "godliness" includes "honesty;" but we must not be the slaves of pedantry in words; it is good sometimes to emphasize.

I. GODLINESS IS ESSENTIAL TO THE ORDER OF THE STATE. Rousseau remarks, "A country cannot well subsist without liberty, nor liberty without virtue." Peaceable lives must be godly lives. The safety of a nation is not "lions chained," but "lions turned to lambs." Modern sociology thinks it can do without godliness. It has invented some philosophy of morals of its own; some ideal of utility called "the greatest good of the greatest number." Philosophers may understand it, but common people cannot. So much depends on what is meant by "the greatest good." For if you exclude the soul, the greatest good is only a secular paradise, and *that* is death to all the heroism which can deny itself earthly pleasure for the sake of high spiritual ends. By "godliness" we understand *God-likeness* in men. Some talk of seraphic holiness; we prefer the old word "godliness." Let a seraph be a seraph; we want to be men. It is not wise for children to sing, "I want to be an angel;" they should want to be good children. We want godliness; purity like God's; pity like God's; fidelity like God's; holiness like God's. "Be ye holy, for I am holy."

II. HONESTY IS ESSENTIAL TO THE TRUE CHRISTIAN LIFE. No fine ideas of spirituality that set at nought common morality must find honour amongst us. While our hearts are in heaven, our feet are upon the earth. 1. We must be honest to our convictions; act out what we think; dare to be true to ourselves. 2. We must be honest in word; dealing in good coin; not pretending to be what we are not. Better honest silver than counterfeit gold. 3. We are to be honest in deed. Whether we build, or buy, or sell, whether we paint with the artist, or mingle in the marts of commerce, we are to see to

it that the stamp of honesty is on all we do. For all this we are to pray; for there is a great sky over us all, and a great Father in heaven, and a great Saviour in whose Name we may pray. So life will be peaceful and holy; based upon the granite rock, but bathed in the delicate haze of the firmament of heaven; solidity clothed with beauty; and he to whom we pray heareth us always.—W. M. S.

Ver. 6.—*The self-giving of Christ.* "Who gave himself a Ransom for all, to be testified in due time." We are indebted to the slavery of St. Paul's time for the use of the word "ransom." So literature, in its words, enshrines history. We cannot make a perfect theory of the Atonement. Many have tried. Some have taken the idea of slavery; some have taken the idea of debt. There has been the "commercial" theory, and the "legal" theory; but no theory is complete that does not contain all the ideas. The idea of "ransom" has had its false theory; for in the seventh century some theologians said, "It was a price paid to the devil." That we are the slaves of sin, and that Christ ransoms us, is the great doctrine of the gospel.

I. CHRIST GAVE HIMSELF. The humanity of that age gave others. What is the great study of the dying Roman age? Selfishness. The patricians, wrapped up in togas, saw, in the Colosseum, the gladiators fall to amuse them. The great generals brought home as slaves—physicians, musicians, and workmen, and used them as good investments. Rome bore away the native art of Greece to decorate its own homes. Not only the humanity of that age, but the humanity of every age without Christ, tends to self-ism. The philosophy of the cross is the only social philosophy. It does not *take*. It leaves men to the personal use of their gifts and possessions; but it says, "Give yourself—your purest ideals, your best impulses, your noblest powers, for the good of others."

II. THE CÆSARS OF THAT AGE HAD NO TRUE POWER. They held men by the throat, and not by the heart; and they were lifted to Cæsarship by the Prætorian guards. They rose and fell by the sword; and the dagger of the Tiber saw the last of them. The words were a satire on the Saviour, "saying that he also himself is Christ, a King"—an unconscious prophecy, and yet how true! His kingdom came without observation; it was an empire within the heart; it was not in word, but in power; it was not with observation, but it silently grew like the mustard seed. Its foundation was in this, "He gave himself"—his exquisite sensibilities, his sacred energies, his unwearied endurance, his contact with shame and scorn; and then, on the cross, he died, "the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God."—W. M. S.

Ver. 9.—*Modest adornment.* "That women adorn themselves in modest apparel." The gospel never permits asceticism. As God is the God of beauty, and nature is clothed with garments (like the high priest of old) of glory and beauty, so here we have the true idea carried out in religion. Women are "to adorn themselves." God's most beautiful work in creation, the human frame, is to be fitly apparelled; for, to this day, art knows no higher subject than the human face and form. But—

I. MODESTY IS TO BE THE SPIRIT OF ALL ADORNMENT, because the nature of the being adorned is a sacred nature. Woman is the true guardian of virtue. Her manner, her temper, her spirit,—all these constitute the best defence of virtue.

II. DRESS IS THE SYMBOL OF CHARACTER. If there is absence of shame-heartedness, there will be absence of shame-facedness. The womanhood of that age had sunk very low. By turns woman had been the toy or slave of man. The gospel uplifted her; for we are all equal in the sight of God. There was neither male nor female there; and she must help the great ideal, and by modest apparel show the innate modesty of her thought and feeling. For, say what we like, dress acts upon the mind and character. Dress like a clown, and you will feel like a clown. Modest apparel need not be shorn of taste and refinement and true beauty. It is no dishonour to a woman that she likes dress. It is *not* Christian to destroy that taste; but that which becometh women professing godliness is modest though beautiful apparel.—W. M. S.

Vers. 1—7.—*Universalism.* I. UNIVERSALITY IN OUR APPEARING BEFORE GOD ON BEHALF OF OTHERS. 1. *Broad teaching.* "I exhort therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thank-givings, be made for all men." This is the first duty which pressed upon the apostle's mind, as claiming attention. If a priest is one

who acts for others, then there is here required of us priestly service, which is only in accordance with our being called, in 1 Pet. ii. 5, a holy priesthood. Our priestly service is here regarded as twofold. (1) *Prayer for all*. For the sake of emphasis and fulness *three* words are used to denote prayer, which a Greek would be better able to distinguish than we can do now. The first word seems to mark the state of need out of which petitions take their rise. The second word seems to mark our approaching God with our petitions. The third word seems to mark the urgent way in which we are to approach God with our petitions. An *intercessory* character is given to all three by the accompanying words. It is right that we should turn our wants into petitions for ourselves, that we should approach God with these petitions, and that we should press them with all urgency. But there is a range of want beyond ourselves which we are here directed to cover by intercession. We are to turn the wants of others into intercessions for them; with our intercessory petitions we are to go to the throne of grace, and we are to press them there with all the urgency of which we are capable. We are not to be so selfish as to think only of ourselves in our prayers. The Spirit, even in the way of blessing us, would direct us away from ourselves to what others need. But for whom are we to intercede? This is the point to which the teaching of the apostle specially refers. It is certainly our duty to intercede for our family and friends. "He that provideth not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." And, if we do not take the wants of our own before God, we are not acting the *natural* part, which is to be expected of us as Christians. But there is also a family selfishness, from which, if we would have the larger blessing, we must be freed in our prayers. "O God, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech thee for all sorts and conditions of men; that thou wouldest be pleased to make thy ways known unto them, thy saving health unto all nations." We are not to be prevented from interceding for others by reason of their ill desert. God has shown us Abraham, that prince of the elder covenant, using his privilege on behalf of underserving Lot, and also on behalf of ungodly Sodom. He has also shown us his afflicted patriarch under direction to pray for the uncharitable Eliphaz, Zophar, and Bildad. They were to offer sacrifice; but God said, "My servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept." "We are to pursue the sinner with love; we are to weave around the impenitent a network of prayer from which he may find it hard to extricate himself." We are not to allow obscurity or distance to separate us from souls. St. Vincent de Paul conveys some of his prayers (as by a definite grant) "to the most forgotten soul in purgatory." Surely we are entitled to convey our prayers to the most forgotten soul in this world. Roman Catholic writers are to be commended for the stress they lay on the ties which unite us to the great human society in which God has placed us. It is not their truth, for it is simply the spirit of our being here enjoined to offer up prayer for all men. We are to think of ourselves as belonging to a great world of need, belonging to it more than we do to ourselves; and we belong to it in this way, that we are bound to pray for it with all earnestness that the ends of Christ may be advanced in it; thus, we believe, making our influence felt in circle after circle to its utmost bound.

(2) *Thanksgiving for all*. It is the frequent teaching of the apostle that thanksgiving is to accompany the presentation of petitions. We are not to be so much taken up with our wants as to forget our mercies. While, then, we are to be quick to see the wants of others, we are also to be quick to see their mercies. And while we turn their wants into intercessions, we are to turn their mercies into thanksgivings. But for whom are we to thank God? We are especially to give thanks for those who are bound up with us in the family unity, if they are free from calamity, and more so if they are the subjects of saving grace. There may be those in our homes who cannot thank God for themselves, and we are to do this for them. But we are to give our thanksgivings a wider sweep. We are to give thanks for our neighbour, even when he may bear us a grudge, even when his interests may seem to conflict with ours. We are to get beyond all that would narrow our souls, and lay hold upon this, that God sees fit to bless him; and why should we begrudge the Giver his due of praise? We are to thank God for those who are sensible of their mercies, and are not remiss themselves in thanking God. We do not need to be afraid of God receiving too much gratitude for mercies bestowed. If there are those who are ungrateful for mercies and do not give God the glory, it is meet that we, who have a right understanding of things and are jealous of God's glory,

should see that he is not robbed of his sacrifice of praise. Our thanksgiving is to extend far beyond our knowledge. We are to seize the spirit of universality which the apostle here inculcates. "Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we thine unworthy servants do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all men." A requirement for both parts of this priestly work is, that we take pains to acquaint ourselves with the men that dwell on the earth, and with what is taking place among them. A second requirement is that we open our hearts to their needs and mercies. By intelligence and large-heartedness, our work shall answer its end, viz. the calling down of blessing on men. 2. *Special teaching.* "For kings and all that are in high place; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity." We are to understand the highest and the subordinate representatives of authority in the state. Our duty branches out in the same way as before. (1) *Prayer for kings and magistrates.* We are to pray for them especially in their official capacity, that they may be enabled faithfully to discharge the duties of their office, and to glorify God therein. (2) *Thanksgiving for kings and magistrates.* In this land we can give unfeigned thanks to God that we enjoy so largely the blessings of good government. The public recognition of kings and magistrates would be conducive to their leading a tranquil and quiet life. The first word points to the state not using its power against them. The second word points to their not provoking a collision with the state. By the course enjoined, a right impression would go abroad regarding them, that they were not decriers of dignities, secret plotters against the existing form of government. It was good advice which was given to the Jews of the Captivity: "Seek the peace of the city, whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace." So the good advice of the apostle here saved the Christians (in the midst of the Roman empire) from many a false step. They could follow the quiet course in all godliness and gravity. The first word points to the habit of the Christian's mind, which is that he has a regard to the will of God in all things. The second word points to his having a regard to the propriety of things, which is "the appropriate setting of higher graces and virtues." Not mere policy, but the God-regarding habit, and the sense of propriety, kept the Christians in the quiet course. 3. *Motive.* "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour." The intermediate reference is brought in to illustrate the universality of our service for others. This service in its *universality* is recommended, as having a high excellence in itself. Moreover, it is peculiarly pleasing to God in his character as Saviour, which is to be further brought out. Even Rousseau is our teacher of universality. "The good man," he says, "plans his life with a reference to the whole, while the wicked man would gladly order all things with reference to himself. The latter makes himself the centre of all things, the other orders all with reference to a common Centre, even to God."

II. *UNIVERSALITY OF THE PURPOSE OF SALVATION.* "Who willeth that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth." It would be making feebleness of the words to suppose the apostle's idea to be that God is *willing* that all men should be saved, as it is plainly dogmatic prejudice that accounts for Calvin's assertion that the apostle is thinking, not of individuals, but of classes of men. It is a great truth, of which we are not to be robbed, that of every man it can be said that God willeth that he should be saved. We are to think of his will as in a state of active volition. It was in this state when, in the depths of eternity, he formed the purpose of our salvation. It is in this state now when, in the pleadings of the exalted Christ, in the workings of the Spirit, in all the dealings of Providence, he is seeking to secure the condition of our salvation, viz. our coming to the knowledge of the truth. We are to understand not mere intellectual knowledge, but experimental knowledge—our laying hold by faith upon our Representative, and coming to know in our experience that there is salvation in him. This his active volition is directed toward all; it cannot be said that he desires the salvation of one more than of another. He uses means, not towards one here and another there, but towards all alike coming to the knowledge of the truth, and finding ample and everlasting shelter in his love. And if it is so with God, it is made plain as it could not otherwise be, that we are not to narrow down our petitions and thanksgivings (which are expressive of active volition) to a little circle of our own, but are to widen them out even toward all men.

III. UNIVERSALITY OF THE DISPENSATION OF SALVATION. 1. *Presided over by the one God.* "For there is one God." The pagan idea was that there were many gods. There was a god for every nation, a god for every small community, a god for every household. The god so attached was supposed to be devoted to the interests of his devotees, in preference or even in opposition to the interests of all others. What was that but breaking up the race into factions, and under the most powerful example? We have a much nobler conception—all men under one God, and not different men under different gods. As we are all under the canopy of heaven, so we are all under the same canopy of the Divine love. "Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also."

"The great God that loveth all,
Hath made both great and small."

That shuts out all *clashing of administration*. As all are under the same Divine government, so all are governed on the same impartial, universal principles, and governed toward the one end of their salvation. 2. *In the hands of the one Mediator.* "One Mediator also between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus." A mediator is one who acts between two. Christ Jesus is here said to be Mediator between God and man. God, as it were, allows the administration to go out of his hands, but it does not suffer in doing so; for it passes into the hand, not of many mediators with many administrations, but into the hands of one Mediator, by which there is preserved the grand equality and universality of the administration. Christ could mediate on the Divine side, being God himself, thus carrying into the administration the whole mind of him whom he represented. The remarkable thing which alone is noted was that, to mediate on the human side, he became man, being linked not to some men, but to all men; so that his mediation could be in the interest, not of some, but of all. It is matter for solemn thought to every man that Christ is linked to him, and linked to him with a view—according to the whole spirit of the administration—to *his* being saved.

IV. UNIVERSALITY OF THE RANSOM. "Who gave himself a Ransom for all." If the language had been that Christ gave himself for all, there would not have been excluded the idea of substitution. But emphasis is given to this idea by the word which is translated "ransom." It is literally "loosing-price instead of." It is implied that we were captives, hopelessly bound in the consequences of our sins. Not able to do anything for ourselves, we needed to be indebted to a substitute. The price our Substitute paid as ransom was himself, *i.e.* his life, which, being the life of him who was God as well as man, was more than equal to the lives of all men together. Such is the way—not to be too much literalized—in which the truth is conveyed here. The stress of the thought is to be laid on all. Time was when it was considered dangerous to say that Christ died for all. The apostle does not shrink from it, neither here nor where his language is that "Christ tasted death for every man." It adds a deep solemnity to the existence of a man, that this price has been paid for him. How shall he get rid of the obligation incurred, unless by doing as the captive does for whose ransom the stipulated money has been paid? As the captive goes forth into the possession of freedom, grateful to his redeemer, so let each of us go forth into the possession of our freedom in Christ, grateful to him as having redeemed us with his blood.

V. UNIVERSALITY OF THE TESTIMONY. "The testimony to be borne in its own times." It is generally assumed that the reference is to the universal proclamation of the gospel. But there is this to be considered, that what is to be witnessed to is, that Christ Jesus gave himself a Ransom for *all*, *i.e.* all that ever lived, that live now, or shall ever live. And this does not seem to be properly witnessed to or borne out merely by the men of a distant time, or of distant times or ages, all having the knowledge of the gospel. It is better not to fix down the manner of the testimony, but to allow the verse to remain in its own universality, to have its due weight as one of many verses that bear upon the same point. There is suggested—not more than suggested—some great testimony to the universality of the ransom. We cannot tell what the testimony will be, as it is here, for good reason, not condescended on. It is not borne now, but it is to be borne—it may be after long ages—yet in its own times.

VI. PAUL'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE TESTIMONY. "Where-

unto I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I speak the truth, I lie not), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth." Paul was privileged in his day—before the arrival of the times—to help forward the demonstration of the universal ransom. For this he was appointed a preacher, literally a herald, *i.e.* one that cried aloud in the Name of Christ and spared not. He was also appointed to the high office of apostle, with which is connected the double asseveration, "I speak the truth, I lie not." We cannot think of it being made thus strong for the sake of Timothy, but for the sake of some who were to be reached through Timothy. He was further appointed a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth. In this he overstepped Jewish limits, and was entering as far as he could into the universality of the gospel. And what he called upon men everywhere to do was to believe, the object of their faith being the truth that Christ died for them and for all.—R. F.

Vers. 8—15.—*The sexes in the Christian assembly.* I. THE PART OF THE MEN—TO LEAD IN PRAYER. "I desire therefore that the men pray in every place, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and disputing." The mind of the apostle, as here expressed, is that in every place where men and women assemble for Divine worship, the duty of conducting the public devotions shall devolve upon the men. They, and not the women, as appears from the following contrast, are to be the *mouth* of the congregation in prayer offered to God. This assignment of leading in prayer to them is mentioned along with the appropriate bodily posture, *viz.* the lifting up of the hands (as toward heaven) in the way of invoking the Divine blessing upon the congregation. With this is connected the inward qualification—lifting up *holy* hands, *i.e.* that do things that accord with their being engaged in so sacred a service. It is not the place that is to hallow the hands, but it is the hands that are to be holy, to be in keeping with the place. The orderliness implied in the men having their proper place would tend to prevent the use of unholy perturbation of feeling, and the breaking forth of unseemly disputing, such as would unfit the congregation for engaging in prayer. "He that prays to God," says Jeremy Taylor, in 'The Return of Prayers,' "with an angry, that is, with a troubled and discomposed spirit, is like him that retires into a battle to meditate, and sets up his closet in the out-quarters of an army, and chooses a frontier garrison to be wise in. Anger is a perfect alienation of the mind from prayer, and therefore is contrary to that attention which presents our prayers in a right line to God. For so have I seen a lark rising from its bed of grass, and soaring upwards, and singing as he rises, and hopes to get to heaven, and rise above the clouds; but the poor bird was beaten back with the loud sighings of an eastern wind, and his motion made irregular and inconsistent, descending more at every breath of the tempest than it could recover by the libration and frequent weighing of his wings, till the little creature was forced to sit down and pant, and stay till the storm was over; and then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing, as if it had learned music and motion from an angel."

II. THE PART OF THE WOMEN. 1. *To be becomingly dressed.* "In like manner, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness, and sobriety; not with braided hair, and gold or pearls or costly raiment; but (which becometh women professing godliness) through good works." It is with regard to dress that the apostle charges the women. They are not forbidden to adorn themselves. In nature God has a regard to adornment; the flowers are painted chiefly in the way of appealing to the sense of the beautiful. So the apostle regards it as particularly appropriate to the women that they are to adorn themselves; but they are to adorn themselves in *modest apparel*. There seems to be a wider reference than modest, and a *twofold* reference. *It is apparel that is suitable to women as such.* This certainly excludes dress that shocks the womanly feeling of modesty. But it also includes dress that is tasteful. Apart from what is expensive, good taste may be displayed in dress, as in the proper blending of colours. There is no religion in negligence as to dress. A woman should never be above attending to what is clean and whole and neat in dress; and especially should she attend to this in appearing in the house of God. *It is apparel that is suitable to women in respect of their circumstances.* Age, rank, means, demands of religion, come in as modifying conditions. A brightness of colour that is in place in youth, is out of place in age. The servant is not to dress as her mistress. She who dresses upon a small income is not to be as she who dresses upon a large income.

There is not to be dressing as though this world were a paradise, and not, as it really is, full of human want. With outward deportment as to dress, are connected the *inward feelings*. There is *shamefastness*, as the word originally was in the Authorized Version. This feeling given to the woman should make her shrink from all impropriety in dress. There is also *sobriety*, or the feeling that keeps the love for dress within the bounds of reason and religion. The apostle descends to particulars. Women are not to adorn themselves with braided hair and gold, or pearls, or costly raiment. It cannot be meant that these things are absolutely forbidden. Long hair is an ornament to a woman, and it is natural that it should be braided. Gold is an excellent substance, and can be wrought into most beautiful forms. It is God who has given the lustre to pearls. Ideas of what is beautiful can be carried to a great extent in garments, as in the garments prescribed for the Jewish high priest. It can only be meant that they are to be *duly subordinated* by women. They are not to make ends of them, as women of the world do. They are not to vie with one another in the use of them. They are not to be used in the way of gratifying personal vanity, or in the way of ostentation and drawing attention upon them. They are not to be used as though they were essential, being only on the outside, and an uncertain possession which cannot be carried beyond the world. They are only to be sought in connection with, and in due subordination to, *inward virtues*. This is the thought to which the apostle carries us forward. There is that which becomes a woman professing godliness, *i.e.* professing to be regulated by the will of God in dress as in all matters. And the will of God will be considered in connection with the state of the world. It is such a world that Christ needed to come into it to save it. Moreover, it is such a world that Christ's servants need to do much saving work in it. And a true Christian woman will not set her heart on what is showy or genuinely beautiful in dress or ornament, but will set her heart on what is more valuable. She will seek to be adorned with the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price. She will seek to be adorned, as the idea is here, with a kindly, benevolent disposition, such as finds its medium in good works. She will consider that the time and money unnecessarily spent upon the braiding of the hair, and gold, or pearls, or costly raiment, is so much taken from her power of performing good works. It must be said that the position of a true Christian woman has its difficulties. Fashion which exercises such a sway is not the expression of pure Christian sentiments. It is to a large extent the expression of worldliness, or the striving after externals. The true Christian woman, then, has it as her task, on the one hand, not to go altogether against fashion so as to be singular and to call attention to her, which would offend her feeling of modesty; on the other hand, to attain to simplicity and inexpensiveness in dress, so as to leave her free for discharging her Christian function as a doer of good works. 2. *To be a learner, and not a teacher.* "Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness." The woman is to be receptive with regard to public teachings. She is to be a learner, not breaking the silence even to the extent of asking a question. For the language here is partly to be explained by what is said in 1 Cor. xiv. 35, "And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home." The position of the apostle, that a woman is not to be a teacher in the house of God, is very implicit: "I permit not a woman to teach." Whatever her qualifications—and some women are better qualified to teach than some men—the apostolic enactment is against her teaching. This enactment is grounded in what is natural. It would be reversing the natural order of superiority for men to sit under a woman as their teacher. It would also be giving woman a publicity from which every one who is unsophisticated and retains her native modesty must shrink. *Her natural unfitness set forth in two facts.* (1) *Eve was created after Adam.* "For Adam was first formed, then Eve." The apostle regards this fact as emblematic of a headship originally given to the man, which carries with it his exclusive right to be a teacher in the house of God. (2) *The woman was first in the transgression.* "And Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression." We are not to understand that, for introducing sin into the world, she was thrown into a subordination which did not originally belong to her. But rather the way in which, acting for herself without regard to her husband, she was worked upon by the tempter was emblematic of a natural disposition which unfits her

for taking a public position. *Promise annexed.* "But she shall be saved through the child-bearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety." So eminent an interpreter as Ellicott interprets this of the child-bearing by pre-eminence—woman giving birth to the Messiah—but without good reason. The apostle has been excluding woman from activity in Church life in connection with which there is publicity; here he points to her proper destiny as activity in family life. There is reference to the form in which the curse fell upon the woman; in connection with this is there promise of blessing. There is not excluded from the promise the lower salvation. A mother, laying hold upon this promise, can hope in her danger to be preserved alive, with due submission, as is right in the sphere of temporal blessing, to the disposing of God. There is special reference to the higher salvation. "She shall be saved," shall find the path of her highest well-being, "if they" (there is a change to the class of Christian mothers, or more generally of Christian women, one depending to a certain extent on all)—"if they continue in faith," *i.e.* toward Christ, "and love," *i.e.* especially toward the needy, "and sanctification," *i.e.* attention to the rules of personal purity, with such sobriety as shall keep them to their proper sphere.—R. F.

EXPOSITION.

CHAPTER III.

Ver. 1.—*Faithful is the saying for this is a true saying, A.V.; seeketh for desire, A.V.* Faithful is the saying (see above, ch. i. 15, note). This manifestly refers to what follows, not, as Chrysostom and others, and margin of the R.V., to the saying which precedes, in ch. ii. 15. *Seeketh* (ὑπέρευται); literally, *stretches out his hands after*. It is peculiar in the New Testament to the pastoral Epistles and the Epistle to the Hebrews, though common in classical Greek (see ch. vi. 10; Heb. xi. 16). The noun ὕψις, appetite, desire (which is found several times in the LXX.), is used once by St. Paul (Rom. i. 27). The office of a bishop; meaning here, as everywhere else in Scripture, that of a presbyter, or priest. Ἐπισκοπή, in the sense of "the episcopate," occurs only here and Acts i. 20, where it is rendered "bishopric" in the A.V., and "overseership" in the margin of the R.V., being the translation in the LXX. of Ps. cviii. (cix., A.V.) 9 of the Hebrew עֲרֵבָה, "his office." Elsewhere (Luke xix. 44; 1 Pet. ii. 12; v. 6) it means "visitation." But ἐπίσκοπος, "bishop" (ver. 2)—except in 1 Pet. ii. 25, where it is applied to Christ—always means the overseer of the particular flock,—the presbyter (Acts xx. 28; Phil. i. 1; Titus i. 7); and ἐπισκοπεῖν the functions of such ἐπίσκοπος (1 Pet. v. 2 compared with 1). It was not till the sub-apostolic age that the name of ἐπίσκοπος was confined to the chief overseer who had "priests and deacons" under him, as Timothy and Titus had. Possibly this application of the word arose from the visits of the apostles, and afterwards of men sent by the apostles, as Timothy and Titus, Tychicus and Artemas, were, to visit the Churches, being occasional and tem-

porary only, as those of Visitors. For such occasional visitation is implied in the verb ἐπισκέπτεσθαι (Matt. xxv. 36, 43; Luke i. 68, 78; Acts vii. 23; xv. 36; Jas. i. 27). Afterwards, when the wants of the Churches required permanent oversight, the name ἐπίσκοπος—*vescovo* (It.), *évêque* (Fr.), *bischof* (Ger.), *biscep* (A.-S.), *aipiskopus* (Mæso-Goth.), etc.—became universal for the chief overseer of the Church. A good work (καλοῦ ἔργου, not ἀγαθοῦ, as ver. 10). Καλόν means "honourable," "becoming," "beneficial," and the like.

Ver. 2.—*The for a, A.V.; therefore for then, A.V.; without reproach for blameless, A.V.; temperate for vigilant, A.V.; sober-minded for sober, A.V.; orderly for of good behaviour, A.V.* The bishop (see note on ver. 1); "a bishop" is better English. Without reproach (ἀνεμίλητος); only here and ch. v. 7 and vi. 14 in the New Testament; not found anywhere in the LXX., but used by Thucydides, Euripides, and others, in the sense of "not open to attack," "blameless." The metaphor is said (though denied by others) to be from wrestling or boxing, when a man leaves no part of his body exposed to the attack of his adversary. The husband of one wife (comp. Titus i. 6). Three senses are possible. The passage may be understood (1) as requiring a bishop, (or presbyter) to have a wife, and so some took it even in Chrysostom's time (though he does not so understand it), and so the Russian Church understands it; (2) as prohibiting his having more than one wife at a time; (3) as prohibiting second marriages for priests and bishops. Bishop Wordsworth, Bishop Ellicott, and Dean Alford, among English commentators, all agree in thinking that (3) is the apostle's meaning. In spite of such consensus, it appears in

the highest degree improbable that St. Paul should have laid down such a condition for the priesthood. There is nothing in his writings when treating expressly of second marriages (Rom. vii. 2, 3; 1 Cor. vii. 8, 39) to suggest the notion of there being anything disreputable in a second marriage, and it would obviously cast a great slur upon second marriages if it were laid down as a principle that no one who had married twice was fit to be an *ἐπίσκοπος*. But if we consider the general laxity in regard to marriage, and the facility of divorce, which prevailed among Jews and Romans at this time, it must have been a common thing for a man to have more than one woman living who had been his wife. And this, as a distinct breach of the primeval law (Gen. ii. 24), would properly be a bar to any one being called to the "office of a bishop." The same case is supposed in 1 Cor. vii. 10-13. But it is utterly unsupported by any single passage in Scripture that a second marriage should disqualify a man for the sacred ministry. As regards the opinion of the early Church, it was not at all uniform, and amongst those who held that this passage absolutely prohibits second marriages in the case of an *episcopus*, it was merely a part of the asceticism of the day. As a matter of course, such writers as Origen and Tertullian held it. The very early opinion that Joseph, the husband of Mary, had children by a former wife, which finds place in the Protevangelium of James (ix.), is hardly consistent with the theory of the disreputableness of second marriages. In like manner, the phrase in ch. v. 9, *ἐνός ἀνδρός γυνή*, is best explained in accordance with the apostle's doctrine about the lawfulness of a woman's second marriage, as meaning that she was the husband of one man only, as long as her husband lived. (For the chief patristic opinions on the subject, see Bishop Wordsworth's note, and Bingham's 'Christian Antiquities,' bk. iv. ch. v.) Temperate (*νηφάλιον*); peculiar to the pastoral Epistles (see ver. 11 and Titus ii. 2), but found in classical Greek. The verb *νήφειν* means "to be sober" (1 Thess. v. 6; 2 Tim. iv. 5; 1 Pet. i. 13; iv. 7; v. 8). It denotes that temperate use of meat and drink which keeps the mind watchful and on the alert, and then the state of mind itself so produced. The opposite state of mind is described in Luke xxi. 34. Sober-minded (*σώφρονα*); in the New Testament only here and in Titus i. 8; ii. 2, 5. But *σωφρονέω* is found in the Gospels and Epistles; *σωφρονίζω*, *σωφρονισμός*, *σωφρόνως*, in the pastoral Epistles; and *σωφροσύνη* in ch. ii. 15 (where see note). Orderly (*κόσμιον*; see ch. ii. 9, note). Given to hospitality

(*φιλόξενον*; as Titus i. 8 and 1 Pet. iv. 9). The substantive *φιλοξενία* is found in Rom. xii. 13; Heb. xiii. 2. Apt to teach (*διδασκαλόν*); only here and 2 Tim. ii. 24, and Philo, 'De Præm. et Virt.,' 4 (Huther). The classical word is *διδασκαλικός*, though chiefly applied to things. In the above-quoted passage in 1 Pet. iv. the gifts of *speaking* and *ministering* are, as here, placed alongside that of *hospitality*.

Ver. 3.—No brawler for not given to wine, A.V.; the R.T. omits the clause *μη̃ αἰσχροκερδῇ*; gentle for patient, A.V.; contentious for a brawler, A.V.; no lover of money, for not covetous, A.V. No brawler (*μη̃ πάρονον*); only here and Titus i. 7; but, as well as *παροίνος*, common in classical Greek, in the sense of "quarrelsome over wine." In Matt. xi. 19 and Luke vii. 34 "wine-bibber" is *οἰνοπότης*. In 1 Pet. iv. 3 the word for "excess of wine" is *οἰνοφλυγία*. No striker (*μη̃ πλήκτην*); only here and Titus i. 7. It is used, though rarely, in classical Greek for a "striker," "brawler." There is but weak manuscript authority for the reading in the T.R., *μη̃ αἰσχροκερδῇ*, not given to filthy lucre, which is thought to have been derived from Titus i. 7 (q.v.). The internal evidence, however, is in its favour, as something is wanted to correspond to *ἀφιλάργυρον*, just as *παροίνος* and *πλήκτην* correspond to *ἐπιεικῇ* and *ἄμαχον* respectively. Gentle (*ἐπιεικῇ*); as Titus iii. 2. So also it is rendered in the A.V. of Jas. iii. 17; 1 Pet. ii. 18. It is very common in classical Greek, in the sense of "fair," "meet," "suitable," of things; and of "fair," "kind," "gentle," of persons. The substantive *ἐπιεικεία* means "clemency," "gentleness," (Acts xxiv. 4; 2 Cor. x. 1). Not contentious (*ἄμαχον*); only here and Titus iii. 3 in the New Testament, and in Ecclus. xix. 5 in the Complutensian edition. It is also used in this sense in Æschylus, 'Persæ,' 955, though its more common meaning in classical Greek is "invincible." No lover of money (*ἀφιλάργυρον*); only here and Heb. xiii. 5. 'Αφιλαργυρία occurs in Hippocrates. The positive *φιλάργυρία*, occurs in ch. vi. 10; 2 Tim. iii. 2; Luke xvi. 14. Neither the A.V. nor the R.V. quite preserves the form of the original sentence, where the three negative qualities (*μη̃ παρόνον*, *μη̃ πλήκτην*, *μη̃ αἰσχροκερδῇ*, T.R.) are followed by three positive qualities (*ἐπιεικῇ*, *ἄμαχον*, *ἀφιλάργυρον*—"gentle," "peaceful," and "indifferent about money").

Ver. 4.—One that ruleth well his own house. The *ἐπίσκοπος* is one who has to preside over and rule (*προστασθαι*) the house of God (ch. v. 17; Rom. xii. 8; 1 Thess. v. 12), as the high priest was called "ruler of the house of God" (1 Chron. ix. 11; Neh.

xi. 11). So in Justin Martyr the bishop is called *ὁ προεστὴς τῶν ἀδελφῶν* ('Apology,' 11) and imply *ὁ προεστῶς*, and similarly in Heb. xiii. 7 the clergy are *οἱ ἡγουμένοι ἡμῶν*, "they which have the rule over you." How needful, then, is it that he should rule well his own house, and have his own children in subjection! The testimony given in this passage to a married clergy is too clear to need any comment. In subjection (*ἐν ὑποταγῇ*); as above, ch. ii. 11, where see note. For the sense, comp. Titus i. 6, which leads us to apply the words, with all gravity (*σεμνότητος*, the contrary to "riot," *ἀσωτία*), to the children. The children of the *ἐπισκοπος* are to exhibit that seriousness and sobriety of conduct which is in accordance with their father's office, *μετά, together with*, as in ch. i. 14.

Ver. 5.—But for *for*, A.V., *knoweth* for *know*, A.V.

Ver. 6.—*Puffed up* for *lifted up with pride*, A.V. A novice (*νεόφυτον*); only here in the New Testament, but found repeatedly in the LXX. in its literal sense of "a tree" or "plantation" newly planted (Ps. cxxvii. 3 (cxxxviii. 3, A.V.); cxliv. 12; Isa. v. 7). Here the *novice* or *neophyte* is one recently converted and received into the Church (comp. 1 Cor. iii. 6; Isa. lxi. 3). As such he is not yet fit to be a ruler and a teacher of the brethren. The reason follows. *Lest being puffed up he fall into the condemnation of the devil.* *Τυφωθείς*, puffed up, is peculiar in the New Testament to the pastoral Epistles (ch. vi. 4; 2 Tim. iii. 4), from *τυφός*, smoke (comp. *λινον τυφόμενον*, "smoking flax," Matt. xii. 10). The idea seems to be "lightness," "emptiness," and "elation." Some add that of "obscuration" as by smoke; *τυφάω*, to wrap in smoke; *τετυφώμαι*, to be wrapt in clouds of conceit and folly (Liddell and Scott). *The condemnation of the devil.* A somewhat obscure phrase. It means either (1) the same condemnation as that into which the devil fell through pride,—and so Chrysostom, Olshausen, Bishop Ellicott, Wordsworth, Alford, etc., take it; or (2) the condemnation or accusation of the devil. In the latter case *κρίμα* would be used in the same sense as *κρίσις* in Jude 9, and would mean the charge preferred against him by "the accuser of the brethren" (comp. Job i. 9; ii. 4, 5). One of the senses of *κρίνω* is "to accuse"—like *κατηγορεῖν* (Liddell and Scott). And this view agrees with *ὀνειδισμὸν καὶ παγίδα τοῦ διαβόλου* in ver. 7, which means, not the trap into which the devil fell, but the trap laid by the devil. It remains doubtful which is the true sense, but (2) seems, on the whole, the most probable. *The devil* (*τοῦ διαβόλου*) can only mean Satan (Matt. iv. 1; xiii. 39, etc), though possibly con-

ceived of as speaking by the mouth of traducers and vilifiers of the Church, as in ver. 7.

Ver. 7.—*Good testimony* from for a good report of, A.V.; that for which, A.V. *Good testimony* (*μαρτυρίαν καλὴν*; see ch. v. 10). So it is said of Timothy himself that *ἐμαρτυρεῖτο*, "he was well reported of by the brethren" (Acts xvi. 2). In accordance with this rule, letters testimonial are required of all persons to be ordained. Note the importance of *character* in a clergyman (comp. 2 Cor. vi. 3). *Them that are without* (*τῶν ἔξωθεν*); used in Matt. xxiii. 27; Luke xi. 39; 1 Pet. iii. 3; Rev. xi. 2, etc., of that which is *outside* or *external* literally, as the outside of the cup, the outer ornament of the body, the outside of the sepulchre, the outer court of the temple. It is synonymous with the more common form, *ἔξω*. (For the phrase, "they that are without" (*οἱ ἔξω*), as applied to those who are not members of the Church, see Mark iv. 11; John ix. 34, 35; 1 Cor. v. 12, 13; Col. iv. 5; 1 Thess. iv. 12.) The opposite is *ἔσω*, *ἔσωθεν* (1 Cor. v. 12; Matt. xxiii. 25, etc.). So *esoteric* and *esoteric*, of doctrines intended respectively for the outside world or the inner circle of disciples. *Reproach* (*ὀνειδισμὸν*); the reproaches and revilings cast upon him by unbelievers (Rom. xv. 3; Heb. x. 33; xi. 26; xiii. 13). The verb *ὀνειδίζειν* has the same sense (ch. iv. 10; Matt. v. 11; Mark xv. 32; Luke vi. 22; 1 Pet. iv. 14), and so in classical Greek. This reproach is further described as *the snare of the devil* (comp. ch. vi. 9; 2 Tim. ii. 26), because it is through these revilings that the devil seeks to impair the power of his ministry and frighten him from the exercise of it. The genitive *τοῦ διαβόλου* depends only upon *παγίδα*, not upon *ὀνειδισμὸν*. The *καὶ* does not indicate that there are two separate things into which he falls, but adds, as a description of the *ὀνειδισμὸς*, that it is "a snare of the devil." The idea in 1 Pet. v. 8 is analogous. There it is by *afflictions* that the devil seeks to devour the disciple who is weak in faith. Those afflictions might well be described as *παγίδα τοῦ διαβόλου*, "a snare of the devil," set for weak souls.

Ver. 8.—*Deacons in like manner must for likewise must the deacons*, A.V. *Grave* (*σεμνός*); in Phil. iv. 8 rendered "honest" in the A.V., and "honourable" in the R.V., and "venerable" in the margin. None of the words are satisfactory, but "honest" in the sense of *honnête*, i.e. "respectable," "becoming the dignity of a man," comes nearest to the meaning of *σεμνός*. *Ἀνὴρ σεμνός* is a man who inspires respect by his conduct and deportment. It occurs again in ver. 11 and in Titus ii. 2. *Double-tongued* (*διλόγους*); only here in the New Testament,

or indeed anywhere. The verb *διλογεῖν* and the noun *διλογία* are found in Xenophon and Diodorus Siculus, but in a different sense—"to repeat," "repetition." Here *διλογος* is used in the sense of *διγλωσσος* (Prov. xi. 13; Eccles. xxviii. 13), "a slanderer," "a false-tongued man," who, as Theophylact (ap. Schleusner) well explains it, thinks one thing and says another, and says different things to different people. The caution here given is of incalculable importance to young curates. They must not allow themselves to be either receptacles or vehicles of scandal and detraction. Their speech to rich and poor alike must be perfectly sincere and ingenuous. **Not given to much wine.** The effect of the best sermon may be undone, and more than undone, if the preacher sinks into the pot-companion of his hearers. He at once ceases to be *σεμνός*, to inspire respect (comp. Titus ii. 3 where the additional idea, most true, of the *slavery* of drunkards, is introduced). Greedy of filthy lucre (*αἰσχροκερδής*); only here and in ver. 3 (T.R.) and Titus i. 7. The adverb *αἰσχροκερδῶς* occurs in 1 Pet. v. 2, and is one of many points of resemblance between the pastoral Epistles and 1 Peter. Balaam, Gehazi, and Judas Iscariot are the three prominent examples of professed servants of God being lovers of filthy lucre. Achan (Josh. vii. 21) is another (see ch. vi. 10). When lucre is the price for doing wrong, it is "filthy." When lucre is sought on occasions where none is due, it is "filthy;" and when the desire of even just gains is excessive, it ceases to be clean.

Ver. 9.—**Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.** *Μυστήριον*, a mystery, is that which, having been long hidden, is at length disclosed, either to men generally or to elect disciples. It is derived from *μύειν*, to initiate, of which the passive *μυέσθαι*, to be instructed or initiated, is found in Phil. iv. 12, and is common in classical Greek, being itself derived from *μύω*, "to close the lips as in pronouncing the syllable *μῦ*," whence also *mutus*. The idea is of something *secret*, which might not be spoken of. In the New Testament we have "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. xiii. 11; Luke viii. 10; Mark iv. 11); and St. Paul brings out the full force of the word when he speaks (Rom. xvi. 25) of "the mystery which was kept secret (*κρυπτημένον*) since the world began . . . but is now made known to all nations for the obedience of faith" (see too Eph. iii. 3—6; Col. ii. 26, etc.). "The faith" is equivalent to "the gospel," or "the kingdom of heaven," or the "godliness" of ver. 16 (where see note); and "the mystery of the faith" might be paraphrased by "the revealed truth of Christianity." What is adled, "in a pure conscience," teaches us that orthodoxy with-

out personal holiness is little worth. Holding "the truth in unrighteousness" is severely condemned by St. Paul (Rom. i. 18). He says of himself (Acts xxiii. 1), "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day" (comp. Acts xxiv. 16; 2 Cor. i. 12; ch. i. 5, 19, etc.). It is much to be observed how St. Paul, the great teacher of the doctrine of grace, lays constant stress upon the functions of the conscience, and the necessity of having a pure conscience.

Ver. 10.—**Serve as deacons for use the office of a deacon, A.V.; if they be being found, A.V. And let these also, etc.** There is an ambiguity in the English here. It is not "these also"—these in addition to others, *i.e.* the bishops before named—but "these be also first proved." Their general character, as described in vers. 8, 9, must not be taken upon loose hearsay, but must be put to the test by examination, by special testimony, by inquiry, and then, if they are *ἀνεγκλητοί*, not accused, not open to just blame, *blameless*, let them be admitted to serve as deacons (see ver. 13, note). The Church of England scrupulously acts up to these directions by requiring written testimonials, by personal inquiries made by the bishop, by the *Si quis*, by the appeal to the congregation in the Ordination Service, "Brethren, if there be any of you who knoweth any impediment, or notable crime, in any of these persons presented to be ordained deacons, for the which he ought not to be admitted to that office, let him come forth in the name of God, and show what the crime or impediment is;" as well as by the careful examination of the candidates. **Blameless** (comp. Titus i. 6, 7); *ἀνεγκλητος*, rendered in the Vulgate *nullum crimen habentes* (which seems to explain the "notable crime" of the Ordination Service), and in Col. i. 22 "unreprovable" both in the A.V. and the R.V. The whole passage, from ver. 2 to ver. 13, shows the supreme importance of a holy and blameless conversation in the clergy.

Ver. 11.—**Women in like manner must for even so must their wives, A.V.; temperate for sober, A.V. Women.** What is meant by these "women"? Certainly not women in general, which would be quite out of harmony with the context. The choice lies between (1) the wives of the deacons, as in the A.V.; (2) the wives of the episcopi and deacons; (3) deaconesses. This last, on the whole, is the most probable. The male deacons had just been spoken of, and so the apostle goes on to speak of the female deacons (*αἱ διάκονοι*, Rom. xvi. 1). He conceives of the deacon's office as consisting of two branches—(1) the deacons, (2) the deaconesses; and gives appropriate directions for each. It must be remembered that the office of the early deacon was in a great measure secular,

so that there is nothing strange in that of the deaconess being coupled with it. The return in ver. 12 to the male deacon is in favour of understanding "the women" of the deaconesses, as showing that the subject of the diaconate was not done with. Chrysostom (who says, "He is speaking of those who hold the rank of deaconesses") and all the ancient commentators, and De Wette, Wiesinger, Wordsworth, Alford, and Ellicott among the moderns, so understand it (see following notes). Grave (σεμνός; see ver. 8, note). Not slanderers (μὴ διαβόλους, corresponding to the μὴ διλόγους of ver. 8). This use of διάβολος, which is the classical one, is peculiar in the New Testament to the pastoral Epistles (see 2 Tim. iii. 3; Titus ii. 3). Temperate (νηφάλους; see ver. 2, note). It corresponds here to the μὴ οἶνον πολλὸν προσέχοντας of ver. 8. Faithful in all things (πιστὰς ἐν πάντιν). This seems to refer specially to their being the almoners of the Church charities, and so favours the explanation of "women" as meaning deaconesses. Πιστός means especially "trusty" (Matt. xxiv. 45; xxv. 21; Luke xii. 42; xvi. 10, etc.).

Ver. 12.—*Deacons for the deacons, A.V.; husbands for the husbands, A.V. Husbands of one wife* (see above, ver. 2, note). Ruling, etc. (προιστάμενοι); literally, *being at the head of, presiding over* (see ver. 4, note). In Rom. xii. 8 and 1 Thess. v. 12 it is applied to the spiritual ruler, the ἐπίσκοπος or πρεσβύτερος, of the Church. Elsewhere only in the pastoral Epistles (above, vers. 4 and 5; ch. v. 17; Titus iii. 8, 14). Their own houses (above, ver. 5). "Their own" is in contrast to "God's house."

Ver. 13.—*Served well as deacons for used the office of a deacon well, A.V.; gain to themselves a good standing for purchase to themselves a good degree, A.V. Served . . . as deacons* (διακονήσαντες); as in ver. 10. In this technical sense only found in these two passages; which well agrees with the late date of this Epistle, when the technical sense of διάκονος was established. Gain to themselves a good standing. The sense of the passage depends a good deal upon the exact meaning of βαθμός. In 1 Sam. v. 4, 5, in the LXX., βαθμός is the rendering of מַדְבָּן (rendered αἶθριον in Ezek. ix. 3; x. 4), a somewhat unusual word for a "threshold." In 2 Kings xx. 9, 10, 11, it is the rendering of מִדְּבָר, "a degree on the sun-dial." This latter seems to suit better the verb περιποιούνται, they gain or acquire, which suggests the idea of *advancement*. It does not follow that St. Paul had in his mind their advancement from the "inferior office" to "the higher ministries in the Church" (Ordination Service); he may merely have meant to say that the discharge of the duties of a deacon

in an efficient and exemplary manner raised a man to high estimation in the Church, and so gave him confidence in confessing the faith of Jesus Christ both by word and deed. Gain to themselves (περιποιούνται); acquire by purchase or otherwise. Frequent in the LXX.; but only elsewhere in the New Testament in Acts xx. 28. Boldness (παρρησία); very common in the New Testament (comp. Acts iv. 13, 29, 31; Eph. vi. 19; Phil. i. 20, etc.), where it is especially applied to boldness in preaching the gospel of Christ. This seems to imply that St. Paul contemplated preaching as a part of the deacon's work. We know that Philip the deacon and Stephen the deacon were both preachers.

Ver. 14.—*To come unto thee; to Ephesus, where Timothy was* (ch. i. 3).

Ver. 15.—*Men ought to behave themselves for thou oughtest to behave thyself, A.V. To behave thyself* (ἀναστρέφεσθαι); variously rendered, both in the A.V. and the R.V., "to have one's conversation," "to live," "to pass (one's time)," "to be used" (Heb. x. 33). It is literally "to go up and down" a given place, "backwards and forwards," hence "to dwell in it." The substantive ἀναστροφή, in the thirteen places where it occurs in the New Testament, is always rendered "conversation" in the A.V. and the R.V., "manner of life," "life," "issue of life," "manner of living," "behaviour," "living." It is a favourite word in the two Epistles of St. Peter, where it occurs eight times. The house of God. This phrase here denotes, as it is explained in the following words, the Church on earth. So Heb. iii. 6, "Christ as a Son over his house; whose house are we," where the reference is to Numb. xii. 7, "My servant Moses . . . is faithful in all mine house." The Church of the living God. Here is again a somewhat remarkable resemblance to the phraseology of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, . . . to the general assembly and Church of the Firstborn" (Heb. xii. 22, 23). However, the phraseology is not peculiar to the Epistle to the Hebrews. Thus we read in 2 Cor. vi. 16, "Ye are the temple of the living God." The phrase, "the living God," occurs seven times in St. Paul's Epistles, and four times in the Epistle to the Hebrews. It occurs three times in the Gospels, once in the Acts of the Apostles, and once in the Revelation. Here it is used by St. Paul to enhance the obligation to a holy and blameless walk in those who have the oversight of his Church. The pillar and ground of the truth. Some apply these words to Timothy himself (Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory Nazianzen, Basil, and others cited by Alford), after the analogy of Gal. ii. 9, where James, Cephas, and John are said to be "pillars" (στήλαι), and Rev.

iii. 12, where it is said of him that overcometh, "I will make him a pillar (στυλον) in the house of my God." And so, in Venantius Fortunatus, St. Paul is called "stilus ille." But the metaphors of "a pillar" and "a foundation" do not all suit the verb ἀναστρέφοντας; and it is well argued that the absence of the pronoun *σε* is unfavourable to the application of "the pillar and ground of the truth" to the subject of the first clause. It is therefore better to understand this clause as descriptive of the Church of God. The Church is the pillar of the truth. It supports it; holds it together—binds together its different parts. And it is the ground of the truth. By it the truth is made fast, firm, and fixed. The ground (ἐδραίωμα). This word only occurs here at all; ἐδραίος, common both in the New Testament, the LXX., and in classical Greek, means "fixed," "firm," or "fast." In the A.V. of 1 Cor. vii. 37 and xv. 58, "steadfast;" Col. i. 23 (where it is coupled with τεθεμελιωμένα), "settled." Thence ἐδραῖω, in late Greek, "to make firm or fast," and ἐδραίωμα, the "establishment" or "grounding" of the truth; that in and by which the truth is placed on a sure and fixed basis.

Ver. 16.—*He who for God, A.V. and T.R.; manifested for manifest, A.V.; among the nations for unto the Gentiles, A.V.; in for into, A.V. Without controversy (ὁμολογουμένως); only here in the New Testament, but used in the same sense in the LXX. and in classical Greek, "confessedly," by common confession. Great is the mystery of godliness.* This is said to enhance the glory of the Church just spoken of, to whom this mystery has been entrusted, and so still further to impress upon Timothy the vital necessity of a wise and holy walk in the Church. *The mystery of godliness* is all that truth which "in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." Godliness (τῆς εὐσεβείας); i.e. "the Christian faith;" what in ch. vi. 3 is called "The words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine which is according to godliness (τῇ κατ' εὐσεβείαν διδασκαλίᾳ)," and in 2 Tim. i. 1, "The truth which is according to godliness." In ver. 9 it is "the mystery of the faith," where ἡ πίστις is equivalent to ἡ εὐσεβεία. Bishop Ellicott, however, does not admit this objective sense of ἡ πίστις or ἡ εὐσεβεία, but explains the genitive as "a pure possessive genitive," the mystery appertaining to, or the property of, subjective faith and godliness; but this is a use not borne out by any passage in which the word "mystery" occurs. It is always mysteries (or mystery) of the kingdom of God, of Christ, of God, of the gospel, and the like. In the following passages the

objective sense of ἡ πίστις is either necessary or by far the most natural: Acts iii. 7; xiii. 8; xiv. 22; xvi. 5; Gal. i. 23; Eph. iv. 5; Phil. i. 27; Col. i. 23; ii. 7; ch. i. 19; v. 8; vi. 10, 21; 2 Tim. iv. 7; Titus i. 13; Jas. ii. 1; Jude 3. Having thus exalted the "mystery of godliness," St. Paul goes on to expound it. *He who (ὅς).* This is generally adopted now¹ as the true reading, instead of Θεός (ΘΣ, instead of ΘΣ). Bishop Ellicott satisfied himself, by most careful personal examination, that the original reading of the Cod. Alex. was ΘΣ, and that it had been altered by a later hand to ΘΣ. The Cod. Sinait. certainly has ὅς, and to this all the older versions agree. The Vulgate has *quod*, agreeing with *sacramentum* and representing the Greek ὁ. Accepting this, then, as the true reading, we proceed to explain it. "Os, who, is a relative, and must, therefore, have an antecedent. But there is no expressed antecedent of the masculine gender for it to agree with. The antecedent, therefore, must be understood, and gathered from the preceding words, τὸ μυστήριον τῆς εὐσεβείας. It can only be Christ. The mystery of the whole Old Testament, that which was wrapped in types and hidden under veils, was Christ (Col. i. 27). Moses spake of him, the Psalms speak of him, the prophets speak of him; but all of them spake darkly. But in the gospel "the mystery of Christ" (Col. iv. 3) is revealed. Christ is the Mystery of Christianity. It is, therefore, no difficult step to pass from "the mystery" to "Christ," and to supply the word "Christ" as the antecedent to "who." *Was manifested (ἐφανερώθη);* a word frequently applied to Christ (John i. 31; 1 John i. 2; iii. 5, 8, etc.). The idea is the same in John i. 14. Justified in the spirit. This is rather an obscure expression. But it seems to describe our Lord's spotless righteousness, perhaps with special reference to the declaration of it at his baptism. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." We have the same contrast between the flesh and the Spirit of Christ in 1 Pet. iii. 18. And between the flesh and the spirit of a Christian man in Rom. viii. 10, "The body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness." To this clause apparently the remark of Chrysostom applies, "God became man, and man became God." "The spirit" seems to mean the moral nature—the inner man. Seen of angels. Perhaps the multitude of the heavenly host who welcomed the birth of Christ were permitted to see the new-born Babe, as he seems to have done who described him to the shepherds as "wrapped in swaddling clothes."

¹ Bishop Wordsworth, Alford, Bishop Ellicott, and Tischendorf, Lachmann, etc.

dling clothes" (Luke ii. 12—14). Angels ministered unto him after the temptation (Mark i. 13), and in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matt. xxii. 43, where the word *ἐφθῆ* is used), and at his resurrection (Matt. xxviii. 2). The special interest of angels in the "great mystery" is referred to in 1 Pet. i. 12; Heb. i. 6. **Preached among the nations** (*ἐκκηρύχθη ἐν ἔθνεσιν*). It would have been better to keep the rendering "Gentiles" here, to mark the identity of thought with Eph. iii. 6, 8, where, in the apostle's view, the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles, that they might be fellow-heirs with the Jews of the promises of God, is one main feature of the mystery (comp. ch. ii. 7). **Believed on in the world.** The next step in this ascending scale is the acceptance of Christ in the world as the Saviour thereof. The language here is not stronger than that of Col. i. 5, 6, "The word of the truth of the gospel, which is come unto you; even as it is also in all the world, and beareth fruit." And in Col. i. 23, "The gospel which was preached in all

creation under heaven" (comp. Rom. i. 8). The statement in Mark xvi. 15—20 might almost have been in St. Paul's mind. Note the use there of the words *κηρύξατε, ἐκκηρύξατε, τὸν κόσμον, ὁ πιστεύσας, πιστεύσας, ἀνελήφθη, Received up in glory.* The change of "into" (A.V.) into "in" is of very doubtful propriety. In New Testament Greek *ἐν* frequently follows verbs of motion, and means the same as *eis*, like the Hebrew *בְּ*. Our Lord is not said to have ascended *in glory* (as he appeared at the Transfiguration), but, as St. Mark has it, "He was received up into heaven, and [there] sat down at the right hand of God," fulfilling John xvii. 5. This grand burst of dogmatic teaching is somewhat like that in ch. ii. 5—7. There is no adequate evidence of its being, as many commentators have thought, a portion of a hymn or creed used in the Church. It rather implies the same tension in the apostle's mind which is apparent in other parts of the Epistle (comp. ch. vi. 11 and following verses).

HOMILETICS.

Vers. 1—16.—The clergy. It was one of the weightiest duties laid upon Timothy, when called to be the spiritual ruler of the Church of Ephesus, to take care that the priests and deacons were men well qualified for their holy office. The condition of a congregation depends so largely upon the spiritual character of those who minister to it, that the choice of fit persons to serve in the sacred ministry of God's Church is a matter of vital importance to the welfare of the people, and demands the utmost wisdom and fidelity of those who have the chief oversight of the house of God. Accordingly St. Paul lays down with great care the qualifications of priests and deacons respectively. For the priest an irreproachable character amongst those outside as well as those inside the Church, in order to ensure respect; a life of chastity, that his example may give no countenance to a lax morality; strict temperance in the use of meat and drink, both for his own sake and as an example to others; a staid, sober mind and demeanour, as becomes one who lives near to God, and handles holy things; a large hospitality, as one who counts all he has to belong to the Church, whose servant he is; aptitude to teach the doctrines of the gospel, and a delight in teaching; a placable, gentle disposition, abhorring brawls and quarrels, and studying peace with all men; the absence of all greediness and covetousness, as one whose conversation is in heaven, and as one determined to be fair and impartial in all his dealings with men;—these are the things needful for one who is a priest in the Church of God. But besides these strictly personal qualifications he must have a well-ordered house. His family must bear the traces of a gentle but firm parental discipline. He that is a ruler in the house of God must show that he can rule his own children and servants; and a portion of the gravity and sobriety of the man of God must be seen in the members of his household. With regard to deacons, they too must be grave in their demeanour and conversation; in all their private intercourse with the members of the Church where they serve, they must be conspicuously honest and ingenuous. In all social intercourse they must show themselves temperate and abstemious. In handling the public money, and ministering the alms of the faithful, they must make it clear that none sticks to their own fingers, and that they have no eye to gain in the ministrations they undertake. The spirit of their ministrations must be "all for love and nothing for reward." Nor must they be only honest men; they must be devout believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, thoroughly instructed in the mystery of the Christian faith, and adorning that faith by their personal holiness. As regards their families, the same rule applies to

them as to the priests. Like the priests, they hold office in the Church of God; they minister in that temple where God's pure truth is fixed and established for ever; they are the expounders, with the priests, of the great mystery of godliness, the incarnate Word, the preached Jesus, the glorified Christ. What, then, ought their character to be; how high above things earthly, how closely assimilated to the glorious holiness of heaven!

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Ver. 1.—*The Christian pastorate a good work.* The apostle, having in the previous chapter regulated the worship of the congregation and placed it in the hands of men, not women, now proceeds to describe the qualifications of the pastors of congregations, as if to imply that the pastorate did not belong to all men.

I. THE OFFICE OF PASTOR IS A GOOD WORK. "Faithful is the saying, If any one seeketh the office of pastor [or, 'bishop'], he desireth a good work." 1. *The office in question was held by persons called by the two names of bishop and elder.* (1) The apostle uses the terms of the same office (Titus i. 5—7). (2) The terms came from two different quarters. The term "elder," or "presbyter," was of Jewish origin, and was earlier than the other, having been long in use in the synagogue administration. It had respect primarily to the age of those presiding over the religious community, but came by-and-by, and especially in the Christian Church, to signify its head, and was a title of dignity and gravity. The other term, "bishop," came from the Greek world, and was a designation of the duties of the office as involving an oversight of the Churches. (3) The term "bishop" is, therefore, mostly employed of the Churches in Asia Minor, consisting of converted Greeks, but the Jewish term "elder" had precedence of it at that earlier stage when the Church consisted of a nucleus of converted Jews. In Crete, where the Greek and Jewish elements were about equally powerful, both terms are used. 2. *The office in question is a good work.* This was one of the faithful sayings of the apostle. It was (1) a work, not a sinecure, or title of honour, but a laborious office, and therefore pastors are called "labourers in the Word and doctrine;" (2) a good work, being excellent in itself, and in its aims as for the good of men and the glory of God.

II. THE PASTORATE IS A WORTHY OBJECT OF AMBITION. "He desireth a good work." It may be laudably desired, not as an office of profit or honour, but with a supreme regard to the glory of God and the welfare of man, and ought not to be undertaken except by those who have a real delight and pleasure in acting upon these great principles.—T. C.

Ver. 2.—*The positive qualifications of the Christian pastor.* The apostle first sets forth those qualifications which respect the personal life of the pastor, and afterwards those which affect his family life. His personal qualifications are those of a spiritual and moral order presented positively.

I. HE OUGHT TO BE BLAMELESS. It may be hard for a faithful man to avoid the censure of a critical society, but he must be irreproachable as being guilty of no scandal, and, above all, free from the vices enumerated under the negative aspect of his qualifications. He must be held in high moral repute by the community around him.

II. HE IS TO BE THE HUSBAND OF ONE WIFE. 1. *This condemns the rule of celibacy in the Church of Rome.* It is quite absurd to say that the "one wife" is the Church; for the context regards the minister as having relation both to a Church and to a wife (ver. 5). Besides, this Roman idea would make the Church the wife of many husbands. Where the apostle, in the seventh chapter of 1 Corinthians, seems to favour a celibate condition "on account of the present distress," it is not on account of any superior holiness belonging to the unmarried state, but because it sometimes affords a better opportunity for pursuing Christian work under trying conditions. 2. *It does not necessarily compel pastors to marry,* like the Greek Church, which yet inconsistently reserves its bishoprics for unmarried monks. But it clearly gives the preference to a married ministry. 3. *It does not mean that a pastor is to avoid a second marriage*—as the Greek Fathers generally understood it under the growing influence of Eastern asceticism—because the apostle sanctions such marriages (1 Cor. vii. 1); and, secondly, because a

remarrying does not make a pastor more than the husband of one wife. 4. It seems, then, to mean that *the pastor was to be "the husband of one wife,"* avoiding the polygamy that was, then so common among the Jews, and the system of divorce still so common in that age, and remaining faithful to the wife of his choice.

III. SOBER. He must be not only so in eating and drinking, but watchful over himself, his work, and his actions.

IV. DISCREET. With a sound judgment and good understanding, capable of directing himself wisely in the midst of difficult situations.

V. ORDERLY. With a due proportion in his life, modest in deportment, courteous to all, of a calm temper and grave demeanour.

VI. GIVEN TO HOSPITALITY. In an age when Christians travelled from place to place, and were exposed to the risks of evil companionship in public inns, it was important that pastors should be able to show hospitality, and assist with their counsel as well as with the necessities of life.

VII. APT TO TEACH. The pastor must have the capacity to impart Christian knowledge, the ability to interpret Scripture, to explain its doctrines, to enforce its precepts, and to defend it against errorists of every class. He must possess the gifts of utterance and knowledge. He must have both "skill and will, ability and dexterity, being neither ignorant of his duty nor negligent in the performance of it."—T. C.

Ver. 3.—*The negative qualifications of the Christian pastor.* I. NOT VIOLENT OVER WINE. In allusion not so much to drunkenness as to the noisy and quarrelsome temper which is generated by wine-bibbing. The word impliedly coudemns both cause and effect.

II. NO STRIKER. In evident allusion to the previous temper. The pastor must never lift his hand in anger or violence.

III. FORBEARING. Reasonable and gentle, rather disposed to take wrong than avenge it.

IV. NOT CONTENTIOUS. Neither litigious nor quarrelsome, seeking peace with all men.

V. NO LOVER OF MONEY. He must appear to be perfectly disinterested, not mercenary in his aims, not seeking his own things rather than the things of Jesus Christ; but, on the contrary, he must himself be generous and hospitable and kind, with a heart and a hand ever ready to relieve distress.—T. C.

Vers. 4, 5.—*The Christian pastor in his home life.* The apostle here turns to the family life of the pastor as an important element affecting the public examination of his character.

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF A WELL-ORDERED HOUSEHOLD. "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity." 1. *The pastor is no ascetic recluse, but shares in the everyday life of the world.* 2. *He must have firmness and authority to rule his family*—wife, children, and servants; not slack in his rule like old Eli, but faithful as Abraham, who not only taught but commanded his children and household to keep the way of the Lord. 3. *He is to rule gently yet firmly*, so as, while securing subjection in his household, he creates that gravity of deportment which is the accompanying grace of obedience in children reared under wise and loving mastery.

II. THE WELL-ORDERED HOUSEHOLD THE TEST OF FITNESS FOR THE RULE OF THE HOUSE OF GOD. "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?" 1. *The argument is from the less to the greater.* The family is the lesser sphere, the Church the larger family. The family needs much prudence, care, forethought, affection. But while it is the narrowest sphere, it is governed with peculiar advantages, arising from the feelings of love and dependence on the part of the children. If there is failure here, there is a self-evident unfitness for the wider and more complex administration of the Church. 2. *The Church of God is to be a subject of anxious care to the pastor.* The Greek word implies this thought. The apostle himself had the care of all the Churches upon him. But the pastor has a care for the individual members of his flock, to seek the conversion of sinners, to instruct the ignorant, to guide the perplexed, to comfort the doubting, to check the

wayward, and to defend the flock against errorists. "Who is sufficient for these things?"—T. C.

Ver. 6.—*The pastor must not be a novice.* "Not a novice."

I. THE ADVANTAGES OF EXPERIENCE IN A PASTOR. The apostle does not refer to youth, but to inexperience. Yet the qualification must be regarded relatively; for a longer or a shorter probation might be required, according to circumstances. The Church at Ephesus had been long enough established to admit of a selection being made out of men of Christian experience and wisdom. It is significant to remark that no definite age is assigned for candidates for the ministry. In a Church like that of Ephesus, threatened with heresy within and violence without, it was necessary that the elders should be men with a rare understanding of the mysteries of the faith, and with a large fund of sanctified experience.

II. THE REASON OR GROUND OF THE APOSTLE'S COUNSEL. "Lest, being besotted with pride, he should fall into the condemnation of the devil." 1. *The risk of the novice is an undue self-elation*, arising from the thought of the dignity of his office and of the estimation in which he is held on account of his gifts. His judgment would thus become clouded, and he would fail to see the true relation of things. 2. *The consequence would be his falling under the very condemnation pronounced upon the devil.* Thus a blinding pride would receive its just retribution. 3. *It is evident that the apostle believed in the existence of a personal evil spirit*, the adversary of God and man. It is equally evident that he regarded the fall of the devil as due to pride, and that he regarded him as the tempter of man.—T. C.

Ver. 7.—*The pastor must have an honest reputation before the world.* He must stand well both without and within the Church.

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF AN UNBLEMISHED REPUTATION. "But he must also have a good testimony from them that are without." 1. *It is a mistake to ignore or defy the opinion of the world in matters falling fairly within its judgment.* What we do ought not only to be "acceptable to God, but approved of men" (Rom. xiv. 18). "Let not your good be evil spoken of" (Rom. xiv. 16). The world understands the principles of natural justice. The minister cannot violate these without loss of reputation and influence. 2. *A blameless life is calculated to make a deep impression on the world.* "Let your light so shine before men, that they, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. v. 16). Your holy walk ought to attract "those that are without" into the happy communion of the Church. 3. *It is a great evil to blast the reputation of Christian ministers*, for it undermines their influence for good.

II. THE DANGERS OF A DOUBTFUL REPUTATION BEFORE THE WORLD. "Lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." It would be a great risk to introduce into the ministry one who had once followed a loose life, because those who were familiar with his history would be ready to suspect the purity of his congregation from the blemished reputation of its pastor. The effect in the minister might be diverse. 1. *He might be excited to an angry resentment of such disagreeable attacks.* 2. *He might fall into despair, and thus become reckless, and ultimately justify the worst imputations of the world.* 3. *He might cease to reprove transgressors* because he had not the courage to condemn faults which were only too observable in himself. Thus the devil would set its snares around him for his undoing. When George III. was asked to give a bishopric to a clergyman who had made a serious lapse from virtue, and was told that the clergyman had long ago repented of it, his appropriate answer was, "I would rather appoint bishops who had not that particular sin to repent of."—T. C.

Vers. 8, 9.—*The qualifications of deacons.* The apostle next proceeds to direct Timothy respecting the character and appointment of another class of office-bearers.

I. THE ORDER OF DEACONS. 1. *Their origin.* We find the first trace of the order about two years after the Ascension (Acts vi. 1-4). It owed its origin to a necessity that arose from the extension of the Church. Seven deacons were appointed as almoners. They are not so called, but their name is traceable in the two terms which indicate the sphere of their office, "serving tables" and "ministry" (*διακονία, διακονεῖν τραπέζης*).

2. *Their sphere of duty.* It is expressly distinguished from "the ministry of the Word" and "prayer" (ver. 4), and was therefore, as the "serving of tables" signifies, an office for the care of the poor and strangers who might be connected with the Church. The deaconship was, therefore, a purely secular office. 3. *Historic notices of deacons.* The earliest notices of the order are apparently in Rom. xii. 7, "Or ministry (deaconship), let us wait on our ministering" (deaconship); in 1 Cor. xii. 28, "helps" (*ὑπηρέταις*); and at a later time in 1 Pet. iv. 11, "If any man minister" (*διακονεῖ*). We read in Phil. i. 1 of "the bishops and deacons," and in Rom. xvi. 1 of Phœbe as "a deaconess" of the Church at Cenchrea.

II. THE QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS. 1. "Grave." Of a serious demeanour, befitting the position of responsibility held by them. 2. "Not double-tongued." Not saying one thing to one person and another to another, under the pressure, perhaps, of applications for assistance; or, not promising aid which is afterwards withheld. Misunderstandings would necessarily arise from any kind of prevarication. 3. "Not addicted to much wine." The deacons must not be given to pleasures of the table, which render people unfit for disagreeable duty, and tempt to the consumption of the wealth committed to their keeping. 4. "Not lovers of base gain." There might otherwise arise a Judas among the deacons to embezzle the Church funds. 5. "Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience." (1) The mystery is what faith is conversant with—a thing once secret, but now revealed by Christ's gospel; called variously "the mystery of God," "the mystery of Christ," "the mystery of his will," "the mystery of godliness," and "the mystery of the gospel," which is the great subject of gospel-preaching. It was the mystery of redemption through the blood of Christ. (2) The mystery of faith was not to be speculatively, but practically, held and maintained. "In a pure conscience." The deacons were to be sincerely attached to the truth, and to realize its practical power in their life and experience. (3) They are to "hold the mystery," not to preach it. There is no intimation that the deacons, as such, were preachers, though two of them (Stephen and Philip) are afterwards found acting as evangelists.

III. THE METHOD OF THEIR APPOINTMENT. "And these also let them first be proved; then let them serve as deacons, if they are without blame." 1. *The election of the seven deacons was left in the hands of the Christian people themselves.* (Acts vi. 3.) 2. *There is no formal method prescribed for testing their qualifications.* Their fitness could be easily judged of without any regular investigation. The moral element, however, was to be supreme in such appointments; for they were not chosen unless they were "without blame." 3. *Their formal appointment to service.* Let them serve in the various branches of their office as deacons.—T. C.

Ver. 11.—*The qualifications of deaconesses.* "Women in like manner must be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things." The allusion is evidently not to the wives of deacons, but to deaconesses. Why should the duties of deacons' wives be set forth when there is no allusion to the duties of ministers' wives? The omission of all mention of domestic duties in this case is significant.

I. THE ORDER OF DEACONESSSES. There was evidently such an order in the primitive Church. Phœbe of Cenchrea (Rom. xvi. 1), Euodias and Syntyche (Phil. iv. 2), and probably the association with which Dorcas was connected at Joppa (Acts ix. 36—41), seem to have belonged to the order. The order did not cease to exist till the fifth century in the Latin Church, and till the twelfth in the Greek Church. It had its origin, probably, in the extreme jealousy which guarded the relations of the sexes in early times, for women were comparatively secluded from the society of men. Deaconesses were, therefore, appointed to maintain the religious intercourse of Christian women with a Church whose ministrations were in the hands of men.

II. THE QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONESSSES. 1. "Grave." Not given to levity or gay manners, but sober in speech, gesture, and dress. 2. "Not slanderers." Not too ready to take up an accusation against the poor, or too ready to use the tongue in the way of false insinuation. 3. "Sober." Not to be given to pleasures of the table, but showing a seemly abstemiousness. 4. "Faithful in all things." Faithful in all ecclesiastical duties. (1) Faithful to the poor, whose secrets are to be jealously kept; (2) faithful to the Church, which entrusts its funds to their wise and discriminating distribution; and (3) faithful to God in all religious obligations whatsoever.—T. C.

Vers. 12, 13.—*The domestic duty of deacons.* The apostle here returns to add some further injunctions about deacons, as well as to suggest a reason for exacting the qualifications already described.

I. THE DEACONS' DOMESTIC RELATIONS. 1. "Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife." The same qualification is needed for deacons as for bishops, for their houses were to be examples of purity, peace, and orderliness. 2. "Ruling their children and their own houses well." The father of a loving household would be best fitted for the sympathetic administration of funds allocated to the poor, while the pious order of his family would enhance the public confidence in the reality of his religious character.

II. REASON FOR THE VARIOUS QUALIFICATIONS DESCRIBED. "For those who have done the work of a deacon well obtain for themselves a good degree, and much boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." 1. *The good degree does not refer to promotion to higher ecclesiastical office.* The idea, indeed, would be quite an anachronism. 2. *It refers to the place of honour and distinction that will be given to the faithful deacon in the day of final recompense.* The doctrine of rewards is that of Scripture, and especially of our Lord's parables (Matt. xxv. 45; Luke xix. 11—27). 3. *There is the further idea of the joyful confidence toward God which would characterize him in view of a faithful discharge of his duties—a confidence springing out of faith resting in Jesus Christ.*—T. C.

Vers. 14, 15.—*The importance of a due regulation of Church order.* The apostle expected to visit Ephesus shortly, but in case of his visit being delayed by necessary causes, he deemed it right to give Timothy these instructions in writing respecting the appointment of bishops and deacons, and other details of Church order. "These things I write to thee, hoping to come shortly; but if I should tarry, [I write them] that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to conduct thyself in God's house."

I. THE NECESSITY OF A DUE ORDER IN THE CHURCH. 1. *Darbyites suppose that it is wrong for man to make arrangements in God's Church—that it is the Holy Ghost who should regulate the order of worship and service, and that his presidency should be recognized in everything.* In that case why should the apostle have been at such pains to regulate even the ministrations of prophets and speakers with tongues at Corinth? God is a God of peace, not of confusion (1 Cor. xiv. 33). 2. *It was not enough for Timothy to stir up his own personal gifts and do the work of an evangelist, but he must execute the special commission he had received from the apostle, to regulate the appointment of the office-bearers of the Church, and the details of Church worship.* The Church was to be guided in choice of ministers by the considerations suggested by the apostle. 3. *There was special reason for these instructions in the rise of heresies at Ephesus and elsewhere.* (Ch. iv. 1—3.)

II. THE DIGNITY AND OFFICE OF THE CHURCH. It is "God's house, which indeed is the Church of the living God, the pillar and basement of the truth." 1. *It is the Church of the living God.* (1) It is so, regarded either as the Christian congregation with a local reference, or as the whole Church of the redeemed, in communion with Christ and with each of its members. (2) Its internal glory consists in the fact that it is no material temple of dead deities, like the proud temple of Diana which reared itself aloft over the roofs of Ephesus; but a spiritual community, realizing the living and personal presence of God in the midst of it. 2. *It is the house of God.* (1) This term denoted primarily the temple at Jerusalem, and secondarily the covenant people (Numb. xii. 7; Hos. viii. 1), who had God for a Sanctuary or Dwelling-place (Ps. xc. 1; Ezek. xi. 16). There was a mutual indwelling—they in him, and he in them. (2) It now denotes the Church of God, represented variously as (a) a spiritual building resting on Christ as chief Corner-stone (Eph. ii. 20); (b) as the true temple in which God dwells (1 Cor. vi. 16); (c) as the household or "house of God," over which is Christ as Son (Heb. iii. 6)—"whose house are we." Moses was servant in this house, Jesus a Son over it; it was, therefore, the same house in the two dispensations. A proof, in opposition to Darbyism, that the Church existed in Old Testament times, and did not first come into existence at Pentecost. 3. *It is the pillar and basement of the truth.* (1) Negatively, Christ, and not the Church, is the only ground of truth. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus" (1 Cor. iii. 11). This passage implies that the Church rests upon the truth rather than that the truth rests on the Church. But a misapprehension arises from confounding the truth as it

is in itself with the truth as apprehended by believers and acknowledged before the world. Further, the truth does not derive its authority from the Church, but from Christ. (2) Positively, the passage sets forth (a) the presentative manifestation of the truth; for "the Church is the pillar of the truth." The Church is to hold up the saving truths of the gospel before the eyes of men. It is a pillar inscribed all over with the truth. Without the Church "there would be no witness, no guardian of archives, no basis, nothing whereon acknowledged truth would rest." It is the Church which holds the deposit of truth, and perpetuates it from generation to generation. (b) The passage sets forth the stability of the truth. "The Church is the basis of truth." The truth finds its true basis in the hearts of believing men, who hold forth the glories of redemption amidst all the fluctuations of the world. There is nothing in this exposition to sanction the assumptions of the Church of Rome, because she must first substantiate her claims to be a teacher of the truth before she can be regarded as "a pillar and ground of the truth."—T. C.

Ver. 16.—*The treasure of truth committed to the Church's guardianship.* I. IT IS CHRIST IN ALL HIS RELATIONS AS THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS. This implies that he is the Revelation of God to man; for God "has made known what is the wealth of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the Hope of glory" (Col. i. 27). Thus Christianity is Christ. He is the Centre of Christian theology, as he is the Object of Christian faith and love.

II. THE MANIFESTATION OF THE PERSON OF CHRIST. He is set forth as the Life of the Church, and if he were not God as well as man, the mystery would not be so obvious to our understanding. 1. *He was "manifested in the flesh."* This very expression implies the divinity of Christ; for it would be superfluous, if not absurd, to say these words of any mere man. The words imply (1) that it was essential Deity that was manifested; (2) that it was a manifestation made, not to our understanding, but to our senses; (3) that there was a real incarnation, for he was manifest *in the flesh*, or, as John says, "The Word was made flesh." It was not only by the flesh, but in the flesh. 2. *He was "justified in the spirit."* He was approved to be righteous in the higher principle of spiritual life within him. There is no allusion to the Holy Spirit. The spirit here is the counterpart of the flesh. Christ fulfilled all righteousness. If his manifestation in the flesh exhibited his true and real humanity, his justification in the spirit exhibited his holiness and perfection. The passage consists of a series of parallel clauses, of which every two form a connected pair. 3. *He was "seen of angels."* In the sense of showing himself to them in his incarnation. They announced his advent, they ministered to his wants, they heralded his resurrection, they attended him in his triumphant return to heaven, and they now see him in his glorified humanity. 4. *He was "preached among the Gentiles."* Here, again, is another pair of opposites; the angels inhabitants of a holy heaven, the Gentiles inhabitants of a sinful earth. It was one of the six glories of our Redeemer that he was to be a "Light to the Gentiles" (Isa. xlix. 6). 5. *He was "believed on in the world."* Christianity is a world-wide religion, embraced by men of all nationalities; unlike Mohammedanism and Buddhism, which are restricted to the East. The gospel finds acceptance alike in East and West. 6. *He was "received up in glory."* In reference to Christ's historical ascent to heaven amidst circumstances of marvellous glory. The last pair of opposites is the world and glory. How far they are apart! Yet they are brought nigh by the blood of Christ. This passage, from its antithetical structure, would seem to have been an ancient hymn of the Church, setting forth the leading facts of the Messianic story.—T. C.

Ver. 15.—*Behaviour in church.* "That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God." "Behaviour" seems a commonplace word enough, and we often assign it a subordinate place in religion. It is, however, a word large as "character." It is a vocabulary in itself. It is not "do"-haviour, but "be"-haviour! What I *do* may be accidental; what I *am* is everything. Paul has been addressing pastors, deacons, women professing godliness, and wives. He has dealt with marriage, and the ruling of children; and now he speaks to the Church about the conduct of men in church.

WHAT IS BEHAVIOUR? A man's behaviour reveals much of what he is. Earnest

or frivolous; gentle or hard; forgiving or unforgiving; selfish or generous; pitiful or censorious; appreciative or unthankful. Behaviour is an every-hour sermon. It corrects the notion that a man's religion is mainly in his doctrine or opinions, his ritual or ceremonial. Manners are not to be put on like a garment, nor can we masquerade in them and pretend to be what we are not. Bending the knee is nothing, if we are not reverent at heart. A gift is nothing, unless given from love. Prayer is nothing, unless our life is a prayer. Praise is nothing, unless our life be a garment of praise. Manners are not etiquette, nor best dresses, nor courtesies of speech; they are the expressions of a life. In this aspect their potency is wonderful. In church we are to behave well; not to give ourselves airs, as rich, or learned, or superior people, but to remember that we are bought with a price. But behaviour is not much thought about. There is an idea that some men are good at heart, though they are brusque, if you knew how to approach them. This is nonsense. The flower does not wait for me to unfold it; it does not say, "If you knew how to tempt my kindness, I would give you fragrant incense." It is a flower everywhere, to everybody.—W. M. S.

Vers. 15.—"What 'Church' means. "In the house of God, which is the Church of the living God." The idea of what the Church is, is to regulate what our behaviour is. The word "church" comes from the Greek words *Kurios oikos*. These two words abbreviated make "church" or "kirk."

I. IF IT BE THE CHURCH OF GOD, IN OUR BEHAVIOUR THERE MUST BE REVERENCE. Reverence is at the root of all religion. Flippancy of manner, indevoutness of heart, will destroy the best service. We read the old command, "Ye shall reverence my sanctuary, saith the Lord;" and wherever we meet together, even in the humblest church, "the Lord is in his holy temple," and we are to "keep silence" or "be reverent" before him.

II. BEHAVIOUR MEANS LIFE. It is the Church, not merely of the God of Abraham, or Isaac, or Jacob, but of the living God. We do not build temples as monuments of a past glory. Christ said, "Do this in remembrance of me." Before his departure he said, "I go away and come again;" and wherever two or three are gathered together in his Name, there he is in the midst of them. This Church of God is further described as the pillar, or ground and stay, of the truth; that is to say, that no sacred books will preserve religion without a sacred life. Men may answer an argument or adopt a theory, but the victory of the early Church was won by the Church's life or behaviour. "See how these Christians love one another." Learn, then, the great lesson, that behaviour is everything. "How unblamably we behave ourselves," says Paul to the Thessalonians. "I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way," says the psalmist.—W. M. S.

Vers. 1—13.—*Qualifications of three classes of office-bearers.* I. QUALIFICATIONS OF A BISHOP. Preliminary direction to Timothy. "Faithful is the saying, If a man seeketh the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." The Scripture idea of the episcopate is that of oversight, viz. of souls. A bishop was one who had the duty of overseeing a congregation in spiritual matters, being, in respect of gravity and dignity, called presbyter or elder. Timothy was to encourage any who sought to enter into the episcopate. The saying in Christian circles was to be relied on, "If a man seeketh the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." It is not a sinecure, but a work or employment taxing the energies. Its excellence lies in its having respect to men's highest interests. *But if he was to encourage entrance into the episcopate, he was not to do so without regard to the proper qualifications which he has laid down for him.* "The bishop therefore must be without reproach." This is a general qualification. A minister is not to be chosen without regard to character. If a man gives just ground for reproach—has not character behind his gifts—he is not fitted for the office of a minister, which is to influence men in the production of Christian character. "The husband of one wife." Some high authorities take the meaning to be that the contraction of a second marriage, even after the death of the first wife, was a disqualification for the office of a bishop. But this forbidding to ecclesiastics of what in the New Testament is expressly permitted to others, seems to belong to a post-apostolic asceticism. The language seems to be directed against any deviation from morality in respect of marriage, whether by concubinage,

polygamy, or improper second marriages." "Temperate, sober-minded, orderly." One who is to be chosen as a minister must be temperate, *i.e.* must have command of his desires and his temper. He must also be sober-minded, *i.e.* must bring sound sense to the consideration of all matters. He must also be orderly, *i.e.* must have a love for good rules. "Given to hospitality." He must be raised above all meanness toward those whom he ought to entertain. How is he to commend the *generosity* of God, if he is niggardly in his own dealings? "Apt to teach." This is a special qualification. With all that is righteous and sensible and even lovely in his character, he must have skill in teaching—in opening the Word, and in bringing it to bear for all its uses on the wants of men. However excellent a man's character is, he is not fit for being a minister if he cannot skilfully handle Divine truth. "No brawler, no striker; but gentle, not contentious." A disqualification is being quarrelsome over wine, and consequently coming to blows. He must, on the other hand, be gentle; *i.e.* while he is to be thoroughly reasonable, he is to be kindly and forbearing, waiving even his rights for the sake of gaining his end as a minister, *viz.* the spiritual good of those with whom he deals. It is a disqualification to be contentious, *i.e.* to be in one's element, and to give way to unholy feelings, in fighting. "No lover of money." It is a further disqualification to have a grovelling desire for money, instead of having a feeling of responsibility with regard to its proper uses. "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity." This is in one view an ordinary qualification, inasmuch as it is what is expected of every one who is in authority in a house. It is expected even of a man who is not qualified to teach that he can rule well his own house, *i.e.* lay down proper rules for his household, and see to their being carried out. The apostle's idea of ruling the house well, is the having the children in subjection with all gravity. "In the phrase, 'all gravity,' he is looking at a kind of obedience that touches the deepest notes of principle and character. Contrary to this, there is an obedience without principle, which is obedience with all levity; that which is paid to mere will and force; that which is another name for fear; that which is bought by promises and paid by indulgences; that which makes a time-server, or a coward, or a lying pretender, as the case may be, and not a Christian. This latter—that which makes a Christian—is the aim of all true government, and should never be out of sight for an hour." *Parenthesis showing how a bishop ought to be able to rule his own house well.* "But if a man knoweth not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?" A bishop has to manage men. The Church of God is the family enlarged and heightened. If one fails in the lower sphere, how can he be expected to succeed in the higher sphere? Even Confucius had before this time said, "It is impossible that he who knows not how to govern and reform his own family should rightly govern and reform a people." "Not a novice, lest being puffed up he fall into the condemnation of the devil." By a novice we are to understand a recent convert to Christianity. Such a one being necessarily inexperienced in the truth, and also in the evil of his own heart, was unfitted for office. And the putting him into office was fitted to have a bad effect upon him. The introducer of evil into the universe was in high position, but gave way to a feeling of pride. How this feeling operated is described by a word which means enveloped with smoke, as if that were the kind of atmosphere that pride throws around a person. In some matter in which his rank was involved, under the clouding of pride, instead of bending to the will of God, which would have been his approval, he asserted his self-importance, which was his condemnation. So the novice, instead of being weighed down under the responsibilities of office, is more likely, under the clouding of pride occasioned by his elevation, to fall into the condemnation of the devil. "Moreover he must have good testimony from them that are without lest he fall into reproach; and the snare of the devil." He must be able to command the respect of non-Christians, especially for his acting in a way consistent with his professions. For if he falls so low as not to be respected by those, then this want of respect is sure to be used as a snare by Satan for his destruction.

II. QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS. "Deacons in like manner." Deacons, originally the almoners of the Church, came to be regarded as *assistants* of the elders, having the oversight of the temporal affairs as these of the spiritual affairs of a congregation. "Must be grave." They must feel the responsibility of life, and especially the responsibility connected with their office. "Not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not

greedy of filthy lucre." Of the three disqualifications, the first has respect to a temptation connected with the desire for public favour, the second has respect to a temptation connected with the enjoyment of hospitality, the third has respect to a temptation connected with the use of office. Those who serve God in the management of the temporal affairs of a congregation must be free from obsequiousness, from intemperate habits, from avarice. "Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience." Their duty to the truth, regarded as the object of faith which was formerly concealed from men, was not to teach it, but to enshrine it in a holy life, characterized by the power which has to do with the production of it. "And let these also first be proved; then let them serve as deacons, if they be blameless." The deacons, no more than the bishops, were to be put suddenly into office. Opportunity was to be given for their being proved, and, if found to be blameless in the estimation of those who had opportunity of watching their conduct, they were to be appointed to service.

III. QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONESSSES. "Women in like manner." The apostle has not yet given all the qualifications of the deacons; we must, therefore, think of these women as closely associated with the diaconate. We might think of the wives of the deacons, but, as nothing has been said about the wives of bishops, and as by the insertion of the phrase, "in like manner," we are led to think of the election of women to office, it is better to think of deaconesses. We have an example of a deaconess in Phœbe of Cenchrea, mentioned in Rom. xvi. 1. They were probably assistants in the same way as the deacons, in so far as they had the care of the sick and the destitute. "Must be grave, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things." It was fitting that those who were engaged in such service should be women who were serious, or free from frivolity. They were not to go about from house to house as bearers of evil reports. They were to be temperate, or free from all unholy excitement. And they were to be faithful in all things, not abusing their charge.

IV. QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS RESUMED. "Let deacons be husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own house well." In these two particulars the apostle requires the same qualifications of the deacons as of the bishops. "For they that have served well as deacons gain to themselves a good standing, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." The old translation is preferable here—"purchase to themselves a good degree." The idea is that they obtain for themselves a step, or get higher up. In those days this might mean their elevation to the episcopate. They also obtain Christian boldness, such as was especially required in those days of peril. For getting up, and the encountering of greater difficulties, go together.—R. F.

Vers. 14—16.—*Upholder of the truth, and grandeur of truth upheld.* I. REASON FOR GIVING TIMOTHY WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS. "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly; but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." Paul hoped to come to Timothy at Ephesus shortly; there was a possibility, however, of his hope not being realized. In the event of his tarrying long, Timothy had written instructions for his conduct as an ecclesiastic. It would be held to be of great consequence that any one who officiated in the temple of Diana should be in a fit state of body and of mind, and should be conversant with the ceremonial. It was of far greater consequence that Timothy should know what was suitable behaviour for the house of God. This was not the temple of a dead idol, but—passing over from the material structure to what was typified by it—the Church of the living God. It was "a living and spiritual community, a life-stream of believers in an ever-living God." It was fitting, then, that there should be those arrangements which are most conducive to the life of the community. This Church of the living God is declared to be the *pillar and ground of the truth*. There was a singular appropriateness in the language. The columns in the temple of Diana were one hundred and twenty-seven in number, sixty feet high, each the gift of a king. Massive in their form, substantial in their basement, they gave promise of the structure being upheld in its integrity down through the centuries. And such it seemed to Paul was the Church—a columnar structure, substantially based, by which the truth is to be upheld from age to age. It is a great honour which God has laid on such imperfect believers as we are; and we should see to it that we do not belie the representation, that we do nothing to take

away from the strength of the structure, that we preserve the continuity of the Church's life, that we witness faithfully to what God is and to what he has done.

II. GRANDEUR OF THE TRUTH UPHELD BY THE CHURCH. "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness." The truth is here called "the mystery of godliness." A mystery is that which, being concealed for a time, is brought out of concealment by a revelation. It is also something above our comprehension. And that meaning is not excluded here. For it is the mystery of godliness or piety. It is the mystery by which the Divine life is nourished in the soul. As religious beings, we need something that stretches away into infinitude. We can only breathe freely in an element of mystery. All religions that have ever been have sought to provide for the appetite for the wonderful. And where there has not been found real mystery, there have been dark inventions. But confessedly great is the mystery which the Christian religion provides for our nourishment. It is pronounced great by all who are capable of judging. And even those who reject it do so not unfrequently on the ground of its being incredible, or too great to be true. The subject of the mystery is Christ. As set forth in the language which follows it is entirely Christ, or the facts about Christ. And the teaching is that it is by meditating upon these facts that we become pious or religious. Of the facts themselves we can take tangible hold; it is when we try to explain them to ourselves that we rise into the region where our religious feelings are excited and receive their nourishment. The rhythmic way in which the facts are presented has led some to suppose that they are taken from a Christian hymn in existence at the time when Paul wrote. We can believe them to have been written by Paul. In either case they have the stamp of the Holy Ghost. They are to be divided into threes, the first two in each division pointing to *earthly* relations, the third to *heavenly*. Of the earthly relations, the first in each division is external, the second internal. *Facts particularized.* "He who was manifested in the flesh." There is good reason for the change from "God" to "He who." We are not dependent on the old reading for the proof of our Lord's divinity. The manifestation of Christ implies previous concealment. And the language is more suggestive of the concealment of pre-existence than of the concealment of non-existence. The beginning of the mystery is Christ coming out of that concealment. "The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us." The Creator descended into the conditions, circumstances, of a creature. He was made of the substance of a woman. The almighty Builder of the universe was a helpless infant on a mother's knee. The eternal Son was the infant of days. He descended so low that he had to proceed from weakness to strength, from ignorance to knowledge. That, however, is only part of the mystery. It is said here that he was manifested in the flesh, and that means, not our nature as it came from the hand of God, but our nature as it has suffered from the fall. He descended into our *weak, passible, mortal* nature, to which the unfallen Adam was a stranger. He was in a state of utter bodily exhaustion from want of food when he was tempted in the wilderness. He sat down wearied with his journey at Jacob's well. He was often worn out with the arduous nature of his work. His compassion brought sorrow to his heart, which found vent in tears and sighs and groans. At last his flesh succumbed, could not bear any longer the burden laid on it; and his lifeless body was laid in the tomb. But still, as we consider, the mystery deepens. He died, not as paying the common debt of nature, but under the stroke of the Divine vengeance. "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, against the Man that is mine equal, saith the Lord of hosts." This is not so much for the understanding as for the inner sanctuary of the heart. It is not so much to be fixed in words as to be pondered and admired and felt. "Justified in the spirit." In the flesh he did not appear to be the pre-existent Son of God, and the Sent of God to be the Saviour of the world; but he was this in his spirit or higher nature, and was vindicated as such both in the Divine marks which were put upon him, and in the principle which pervaded his life. There was a mark put upon him at the very first in his being separated from the taint of our nature through the power of the Holy Ghost. The glimpse we have of him in his youth shows him right in spirit both toward his Father and that Father's earthly representatives. At his baptism he received not the Spirit by measure, and there was the attestation of the voice from the excellent glory, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." At the outset of his public career, under extreme temptation, he showed that he was not to be turned aside from his mission. His starry pathway of miracles witnessed to

the truth of his claims. And not less did his opening of the mind of God, and application of the truth to human need, witness to the singleness and loftiness of his spirit. There was a reiterated attestation from heaven to his Divine nature and mission at his transfiguration. But especially was he justified in the manner in which he died. He resisted unto blood, striving against sin. As we with some degree of resignation may bear a light trial, so he with perfect resignation bore the unmitigated weight of the Divine vengeance. As we with some degree of self-forgetfulness may labour for those who are near to us, so he with perfect self-forgetfulness and magnanimity sacrificed himself for sinners. That death in all its terribleness, reaching far beyond our conception, was what pre-eminently made proof of him, and it showed his spirit to be in perfect accord with the will of God in salvation. Last of all, he was justified by his resurrection. It is said, in Rom. i. 4, that by this he was declared with power to be the Son of God. It was God setting his seal upon his whole career. Because he was pleased with the manner in which he had acted all along, saw the ends of justice and mercy carried out successfully in human salvation, therefore it was that he raised him from the dead. "Seen of angels." He was an object of interest to the heavenly world. We find angels jubilantly ushering him into this world, within sight and hearing of men. They appear at the commencement of his ministry, strengthening him after his temptation. And again they appear at the close, strengthening him after his agony, and also watching over his tomb. But were they not always there behind the veil? Unseen by us, they go about our world ministering to the heirs of salvation. Would they not minister, more than was seen, to the Author of salvation? They came forward upon the scene at critical times. It was enough; we can imagine the rest. But the language seems also to point to the fact that, in becoming incarnate, Christ made himself to be seen by angels. In the human form assumed by him he held them in rapt gaze. They could not turn away from beholding and wondering. They saw the Son of God in a form that was level to them, that was even below them; for he was made a little lower than the angels. What cause for wonder in the change from that ineffable, unapproachable glory to this frail flesh; from that God most high, to this infant lying in a manger! And as the mystery was developed, how would their wonder increase! He was degraded until he could to no lower depth be degraded. Well might they be overwhelmed with wonder as they looked on at Calvary. Having a desire to look into these things, as we are told, they would be lost in trying to account for them. Even when knowing the object contemplated, they would be amazed to think that, for the accomplishment of it, the Divine Son should descend into such a condition of mortal woe. "Preached among the nations." This is quite a new interest. Angels merely saw, admired from a distance. They were spectators contemplating that in which they were not directly involved. It was different with men. He was the subject of an evangel to them. He was proclaimed as their personal Saviour, without whom they were lost, in whom alone they had standing before God and everlasting blessedness. But stress is laid upon the universal reference of the preaching. He was preached, not to one nation, but among the nations (Jews included), without distinction. This was being realized as historical fact. He was being proclaimed without respect to national distinction, without respect to social condition, without respect to culture, with respect simply to the fact that all were sinners and in need of salvation. Following upon his having taken the common nature, and his having wrought out the common salvation, the message of salvation was being conveyed with the utmost impartiality. This was part of the mystery which was then being disclosed, and which the unprejudiced agreed in calling great. It was impressive to the early Church to witness the proclamation of a world-wide salvation. "Believed on in the world." God does not force us to believe. There must be a sufficient cause for our faith, sufficient to move our hearts and gain us over. Our faith must be caused in a rational way, in a way consistent with the nature of God and our own nature. The cause must be homogeneous with respect to the effect, spiritual as faith is a spiritual effect. How, then, is Christ to be believed on in the world, i.e. in that which is naturally unbelieving, which contains no germ of faith which can be cultivated? How can light be brought out of darkness, how can faith be brought out of unbelief? And yet what have we here? There is such a potency in the fact of God incarnate as to work a moral miracle, to evoke faith from that which is naturally incapable of faith. And wherein does the potency lie? It is in the love which the fact manifests. "The Son of God,

who loved me, and gave himself up for me." He did not spare himself all the humiliation of the death of the cross. That is a fact which requires to be contemplated; but, as it is contemplated, it asserts its power over hearts, so as to make the insensate feel, the unbelieving believe. Now, the apostle regards it as glorious testimony to the greatness of the mystery that Christ should actually be believed on in the world, that there should be some trophies of the power of his love over unbelief, that there should be some to offer him a home in their hearts. "Received up in glory." In the biographies of great men we are told of one achievement gained after another, of one honour conferred after another. But however long and glorious the scroll which can be shown, it has to end with their bidding a long farewell to all their greatness. And, though monuments are raised to their memory, it cannot take away the essential ingloriousness of the termination to their career. With Christ it is at the earthly termination that to outward appearance he becomes great. He had indeed, like others and more than others, to undergo the ingloriousness of dying, and of being laid in the tomb. But that ingloriousness was completely reversed by his resurrection. He lingered long enough on earth for history to attest the fact that he was indeed risen. And then he made his triumphal entry into heaven. "Why leap ye, ye high hills? this is the hill which God desireth to dwell in; yea, the Lord will dwell in it for ever. The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive." He was received up into glory—into glorious exaltation in our nature at the right hand of God—and in glory he for ever remains. This is conclusive evidence to the greatness of the mystery. The godly delight to dwell upon and to feed their life, not only with the humiliation, but, beyond that, with the exaltation.—R. F.

EXPOSITION.

CHAPTER IV.

Ver. 1.—*But for now, A.V.; saith for speaketh, A.V.; later for the latter, A.V.; fall away for depart, A.V.* The Spirit saith expressly (*ῥητός*); only here in the New Testament, and very rare in classical Greek. But the adjective *ῥητός*, in the sense of something "laid down," "definite," "expressly mentioned," is common. It was, doubtless, on account of these prophetic warnings of a falling away from the faith, that the apostle gave the preceding heads of Christian doctrine in such a terse and tangible form, and laid such a solemn charge upon Timothy. (For examples of these prophetic utterances, see Acts xi. 28; xiii. 2; xx. 28; xxi. 11; 1 Cor. xii. 8; xiv. 30, 32, etc.) Shall fall away (*ἀποστήσονται*). So St. Paul says (2 Thess. ii. 3) that the day of Christ will not be, "except the falling away (*ἡ ἀποστασία*) come first" (comp. Heb. iii. 12). The faith; objective (see ch. iii. 9 and 16, note). This "falling away" is to take place *ἐν ὕστεροις καιροῖς*; not, as in the R.V., in "later times" but as in the A.V., "the latter times." The adjective *ὑστερος* is only found here in the New Testament. But in the LXX. (e.g. 1 Chron. xxix. 29; Jer. l. 19 [xxvii. 17, LXX.]), *ὑστερος* means "the last," as opposed to "the first." And so the adverb *ὑστερον* always in the New Testament (see Matt. iv. 2; xxi. 37; xxvi. 60; or more fully *ὑστερον*

πάντων, xxii. 27). Here, therefore, *ἐν ὕστεροις καιροῖς* is equivalent to *ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις* (Acts ii. 17) and *ἐν ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις* (2 Tim. iii. 1; comp. Jas. v. 3; 1 Pet. i. 5; 2 Pet. iii. 3; Jude 18). It should be observed that in all these passages there is no article. Giving heed (*προσέχοντες*); as in ver. 13; in ch. i. 4; Titus i. 14; Acts viii. 6, and elsewhere. Seducing spirits (*πνεύμασι πλάνοις*). Such were the "lying spirits" who deceived (*ἠπάτησαν*) Ahab to his destruction (2 Kings xxii. 22). *Πλάνος*, seducing, is not elsewhere found in the New Testament as an adjective (see Matt. xxvii. 63; 2 Cor. vi. 8; 2 John 7, in all which places, however, it is almost an adjective). The idea is "causing to wander," or "go astray." St. John warns his people against such deceiving spirits (John iv. 1—6). He calls them generically *πνεῦμα τῆς πλάνης*, "the spirit of error." Doctrines of devils; i.e. teachings suggested by devils. So the unbelieving Jews suggested that John the Baptist had a devil (Luke vii. 33), and that our Lord himself had a devil (John vii. 20; viii. 48, 52; x. 19).

Ver. 2.—*Through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies for speaking lies in hypocrisy, A.V.; branded in their own conscience as with for having their conscience seared with, A.V.* Through the hypocrisy of men, etc. The construction is rather obscure, as the most obvious way of construing is that of the A.V., where *ψευδολογων* must agree with

δαιμονίων. But then the clause, "having their conscience seared with a hot iron," does not suit "devils." It is therefore, perhaps, best to translate the clause as the R.V. does, and to explain, with Bishop Ellicott, that the preposition *ἐν*, which precedes *ὑποκρίσεις*, defines the *instrument* by which they were led to give heed to seducing spirits, viz. the hypocritical pretences of the men who spake lies, and whose consciences were seared. If *ψευδολόγων* agrees with *δαιμονίων*, we must conceive that St. Paul passes insensibly from "the devils" to the false teachers who spake as they taught them. In the Gospels, the speech of the devils, and of those possessed by devils, is often interchanged, as e.g. Luke iv. 33, 34, 41; Mark i. 23, 24. Men that speak lies (*ψευδολόγων*); only found here in the New Testament, but occasionally in classical Greek. Branded (*κεκαυτηριασμένων*); here only in the New Testament, but used in Greek medical and other writers for "to brand," or "cauterize;" *καυτήρ* and *καυτήριον*, a branding-iron. The application of the image is somewhat uncertain. If the idea is that of "a brand," a mark burnt in upon the forehead of a slave or criminal, then the meaning is that these men have their own infamy stamped upon their own consciences. It is not patent only to others, but to themselves also. But if the metaphor is from the cauterizing a wound, as the A.V. takes it, then the idea is that these men's consciences are become as insensible to the touch as the skin that has been cauterized is. The metaphor, in this case, is somewhat similar to that of *παρώδω, πάρωσις* (Mark iii. 5; vi. 52; John xii. 40, etc.). The latter interpretation seems to suit the general context best, and the medical use of the term, which St. Paul might have learnt from Luke. The emphasis of *τῆς ἰδίας*, "their own conscience," implies that they were not merely deceivers of others, but were self-deceived.

Ver. 3.—*Created for hath created*, A.V.; *by for of*, A.V.; *that for which*, A.V. **Forbidding to marry**. This is mentioned as showing itself first among the Essenes and Therapeutae by Josephus ('Bull. Jud.,' ii. viii. 2, and 'Ant. Jud.,' xviii. i. 5). It became later a special tenet of the Gnostics, as stated by Clem. Alex., 'Strom.,' iii. 6; Irenæus, 'Hær.,' i. 22, etc. (quoted by Ellicott). See other quotations in Pole's Synopsis. **Commanding to abstain from meats**; *βρωμάτων* (1 Cor. viii. 8; Heb. ix. 10; comp. *βρώσει*, Col. ii. 16; Rom. xiv. 17). The word "commanding" has to be supplied from the preceding *καλούντων*, "commanding not." Some of the sects prohibited the use of animal food. A trace of this asceticism in regard to food is found in

Col. ii. 16, 21, 23. (For a full list of authorities on the asceticism of the Jewish sects, see Bishop Lightfoot, 'Introduction to the Epistle to the Coloss.,' pp. 83, 84.) The chief passages relating to it are those referred to above from Josephus: *Γάμου ὑπεροφία παρ' αὐτοῖς*, "They despise marriage;" *Ἐσσηαίων οὐδεὶς ἀγεται γυναῖκα*, "None of the Essenes marry" (Philo, 'Fragm.,' p. 633); *"Gens sine uliâ feminâ, venere abdicatâ"*—"A people without a single woman, for they renounce marriage" (Plin., 'Nat. Hist.,' v. 15). As regards their food, Bishop Lightfoot says, "The Essene drank no wine; he did not touch animal food. His meal consisted of a piece of bread, and a single mess of vegetables" ('Introd.,' p. 86). Professor Burton (in Kitto's 'Cyclopædia,' art. "Gnosticism") says of the later Gnostics that, from their principle of the utter malignity of matter, and the elevating nature of *γνώσις*, two very opposite results ensued—one that many Gnostics led very profligate lives; the other that many practised great austerities in order to mortify the body and its sensual appetites (p. 770). Some of our modern Eucratites, in their language concerning the use of wine and beer, approach Gnosticism very closely. To be received (*εἰς μετέληψιν*); a classical word, but only found here in the New Testament, not used by the LXX. With thanksgiving. Observe the identity of thought with Rom. xiv. 6. These passages, together with our Lor.'s action at the last Supper (Luke xxii. 17, 19), at the multiplication of the loaves and fishes (Luke ix. 16), and St. Paul's on board ship (Acts xxvii. 35), are conclusive as to the Christian duty of giving thanks, commonly called "saying grace" at meals. The truth (see ch. iii. 15; John xviii. 37; Eph. iv. 21, etc.).

Ver. 4.—*Is to be rejected for to be refused*, A.V. **Nothing is to be rejected**. The A.V., "nothing to be refused," manifestly uses "nothing" in its adverbial sense ("in no degree," "not at all," Johnson's 'Dict.'). as *οὐδέν* in Greek is also commonly used (Liddell and Scott). In fact, it is very difficult to construe the passage as the R.V. does. To say "nothing is to be rejected if it is received," is scarcely sense. But to say that every creature of God is good (and on that account not to be rejected) if it is received with thanksgiving, is very good and edifying sense. **Creature** (*κτίσμα*). The form commonly used by St. Paul is *κτίσις* (Rom. viii. 20, 21, 22; 2 Cor. v. 17, etc.). But *κτίσμα* stands by the side of *κτίσις*, like *βρώμα* by the side of *βρώσις*, *δραμα* by the side of *δρασις*, *πόμα* by the side of *πόσις*, and many more. The form *κτίσμα* is found in Jas. i. 18; and twice in Revelation.

Good (καλόν); with reference to Gen. i. 10, 12, etc. To be refused (ἀπόθλητον); only here in the New Testament, but found in classical Greek, and not uncommon in the LXX. and other Greek versions, for that which is "unclean," or "abominable." If it be received with thanksgiving. This clearly refers to "every creature of God," and is the condition on which it is good in relation to the receiver. Nothing can be clearer or more certain than that the apostle is not arguing against the Manichean doctrine of the evil of matter, or the works of the Demiurge, but against Jewish scruples about meats. "Every creature of God," he says, "is good"—words which would have no force if the creatures in question were not admitted to be the works of God, but thought to be the works of the Demiurge. But applied to the Jewish scruples, the words are perfectly relevant. Every creature of God is good, and on no account to be treated as common or unclean (Acts x. 15, 28), provided only that it be received with thanksgiving.

Ver. 5.—*Through for by, A.V. It is sanctified through the Word of God.* Considerable difference of opinion prevails among commentators as to the precise meaning of this verse, especially of the phrase, "the Word of God." Some refer to Gen. i. 4, 10, 12, etc.; others to Gen. i. 29; ix. 4, as containing the original grant of meats for the use of man; others to the scriptural phrases embodied in the words of the ἐντεύξις, the prayer of thanksgiving. Another possible reference would be to the Word of God recorded in Acts x. 13, 15, 28, by which that which had previously been unclean was now made clean or holy; or, lastly, it might mean "the blessing of God" given in answer to the "prayer" on each occasion, which suits well the present tense, ἀγιάζεται. Prayer (ἐντεύξις; see ch. ii. 1, note).

Ver. 6.—*Mind for remembrance, A.V.; Christ Jesus for Jesus Christ, A.V. and T.R.; nourished for nourished up, A.V.; the faith for faith, A.V.; the good for good, A.V.; which thou hast followed until now for whereunto thou hast attained, A.V. If thou put the brethren in mind of these things (ταῦτα ἀποτίθεμενος τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς); if thou suggest these things to the brethren, lay them down as principles upon which their conduct is to be based; or, enjoin them (Liddell and Scott). It only occurs in this metaphorical sense here in the New Testament, but is very common in classical Greek, and not unfrequent in the LXX. It has often the meaning of "to advise" or "counsel." Of course, "hypothesis," the assumed basis from which you start, is the same root. The brethren (τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς). The distinctive name for the members of Christ's Church, throughout the*

Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles. The whole body is called ἡ ἀδελφότης, "the brotherhood" (1 Pet. ii. 17; v. 9). A good minister (διδάσκων). The application of this term to Timothy, like that of ἐπίσκοπος to presbyters (ch. iii. 2), is an indication of the early date of the Epistle, before the distinctive names of the Church officers had quite hardened down into a technical meaning. Nourished (ἐντρέφόμενος); here only in the New Testament, and not used in the LXX.; but in classical Greek not uncommon in the sense of "brought up in," "trained in from childhood." In Latin, *innutritus*. The phrase, "nourished in the words of the faith," etc., explains the καλὸς δάσκαλος, and shows what a man must be to deserve the appellation—one, viz., who is nourished in the words of the faith, etc. The faith; here again objective, as in ver. 6 (see note). The good doctrine, etc. In opposition to the "doctrines of devils" in ver. 1. The different epithets of this true Christian doctrine are ἡ καλὴ (as here); ἡ ὑγιαίνουσα (ch. i. 10; Titus i. 9; ii. 1); ἡ κατ' εὐσεβείαν διδασκαλία (ch. vi. 3); and in ch. vi. 1 we have simply ἡ διδασκαλία, without any epithet. In like manner, ἡ πίστις, ἡ ἀληθεία, ἡ εὐσεβεία, severally denote the Christian religion. Which thou hast followed until now (ἧ παρρηκολούθησας). This is a rather more faithful rendering than that of the A.V.; it is, literally, *which thou hast kept close to*, either for the purpose of imitating it, or, as 2 Tim. iii. 10, for the purpose of observing it. Or, to put it differently, in one case so as to teach it identically, and in the other so as to know it perfectly. In this last aspect it is also used in Luke i. 3. The classical use is "to follow closely any one's steps," or "the course of events," when used literally; or, metaphorically, "to follow with one's thoughts," "to understand."

Ver. 7.—*Unto godliness for rather unto godliness, A.V.* The R.V., by putting a full stop after "fables," disturbs the natural flow of the thought. The two imperatives παραιοῦ and γυμνάζε connect and contrast the thoughts in the two clauses of the verse, as the A.V. indicates by the insertion of "rather." Profane (βεβήλους; ch. i. 9, note). Old wives' (γῥαῖδες); only here in the New Testament; not used in LXX.; rare in classical Greek. Exercise thyself unto godliness (γυμνάζε σεαυτὸν). The verb γυμνάζειν occurs in the New Testament only in this place, twice in the Epistle to the Hebrews (v. 14; xii. 11), and once in 2 Peter (ii. 14). In the LXX. it occurs only once (2 Macc. x. 15), but is common in classical Greek. The metaphor is drawn from training for gymnastic exercises. As regards the whole passage, it seems that there were current among the Jews at this time many

"fables" (ch. i. 4; 2 Tim. iv. 4; Titus i. 14; 2 Pet. i. 16), childish legends and doctrines, some of them directed especially to enforcing certain rules about eating and drinking, and other "bodily exercises," which St. Paul utterly discountenances, and contrasts with that "good doctrine" which he directs Timothy continually to teach. This would account, naturally, for the introduction of the phrase, *γυμναζε σεαυτόν*.

Ver. 8.—*Is profitable for a little for profitteth little, A.V.; for for unto, A.V.; which for that, A.V. Bodily exercise.* Exercise which only affects the body, such as those rules which the Jewish ascetics enforced. *Γυμνασία* only occurs here in the New Testament, and not at all in the LXX., but is not uncommon in classical Greek. Another form is *γύμνασις*, and *γυμνάσιον* is the place where such *γύμνασις* takes place. For a little; margin, *for little*, which is the best rendering. *Πρὸς ὀλίγον*, as Ellicott well remarks, may mean either "for a little while" or "for a little" (better, "for little"), but cannot mean both. The contrast with *πρὸς πάντα* determines its meaning here to be "for little," which is exactly the same meaning as the A.V. Promise of the life. The genitive here is the genitive of the thing promised, as in Acts ii. 33; Gal. iii. 14; 2 Tim. i. 1. And the thing promised is "the life that now is," meaning, of course, its enjoyment in peace and happiness (comp. Ps. xxxiv. 12 [xxxiii., LXX.], where *ὁ θεῶν ζωὴν* is parallel to *ἀγαπῶν ἡμέρας . . . ἀγαθῆς*); and "that which is to come," viz. eternal life. There is no occasion to strain after greater grammatical precision. There is no contradiction between this statement of the happiness of a godly life and St. Paul's statement in 1 Cor. xv. 19. Another possible way of construing the words is that of Bishop Ellicott and the 'Speaker's Commentary': "Having the promise of life, both the present and the future." But in this case we should have had *τῆς τε νῦν καὶ κ.τ.λ.*

Ver. 9.—*Faithful is the saying for this is a faithful saying, A.V. (see ch. i. 15, note). Here, however, the πιστὸς λόγος is that which precedes, viz. that "godliness is profitable for all things," etc., which we thus learn was a proverbial saying.*

Ver. 10.—*To this end for therefore, A.V.; labour and strive for both labour and suffer reproach, A.V. and T.R.; have our hope set on for trust in, A.V.; them for those, A.V. For to this end; or, with this in view.* He thus justifies his assertion that the saying he had quoted is a faithful one, by showing that the promise and all that it contained was the ground of all his labours and those of his fellow-labourers in the gospel. *Strive (ἀγωνίζεσθαι)*; so many good manuscripts, instead of T.R. *ἀνεδίδόμεθα*; but the read-

ing is doubtful. The sense of the T.R., "suffer reproach," seems preferable, and the expression more forcible, as conveying something more than mere labour—the bitter reproaches and persecutions which he endured (2 Tim. iii. 11; 1 Cor. iv. 9—13; 2 Cor. xi. 23—27); and all because of his firm trust in the promises of the living God. Our hope set on. Rather a clumsy phrase, though it expresses accurately the *ἐλπίζομεν ἐπὶ Θεῷ ζῶντι*; but it was hardly worth altering the A.V., "we trust in the living God." In ch. v. 5 we have *ἐλπίζομεν ἐπὶ Θεῷ*, with no appreciable difference of sense. Specially of them that believe; and therefore we who believe have special cause to hope in him, and to trust his promises.

Ver. 11.—*Command (παράγγελλε; see ch. i. 3, note; v. 7; vi. 13, 17).* It is used very frequently in the Gospels of our Lord's commands to the apostles and others, and by St. Paul of his own apostolic directions to the Churches (1 Thess. iv. 11; 2 Thess. iii. 4, 6, etc.).

Ver. 12.—*An ensample to them that believe for an example of the believers, A.V.; manner of life for conversation, A.V.; love for charity, A.V.; R.T. omits in spirit, A.V. and T.R. Let no man despise thy youth (comp. 1 Cor. xvi. 11; Titus ii. 15).* The construction of the sentence is manifestly that adopted in the A.V. and followed in the R.V. Timothy would certainly be under forty years at this time, and might be not above thirty-five. Either age would be decidedly early for so responsible an office—one in which he would have many elders (*πρεσβύτεροι*) under him (ch. v. 1, 17, 19). An ensample (*τύπος*); properly the original "pattern" or "model" after which anything is made or fashioned; hence a "pattern" or "example." It is used in the same sense as here in Phil. iii. 17; 1 Thess. i. 7; 2 Thess. iii. 9; Titus ii. 7; 1 Pet. v. 3. *Them that believe.* The R.V. has apparently so translated *τῶν πιστῶν* in order to assimilate it with the *πιστῶν* in ver. 10. But *οἱ πιστοί* are simply "believers," or "Christians"—"the flock," as St. Peter has it, and had better be so rendered. Timothy is exhorted to make it impossible for any one to question his authority on the score of his youth by being a model of the Christian graces required in believers. In word. Specially in his teaching. The exhortation to Titus (ii. 1, 7, etc.) is very similar, "Speak thou the things which befit the sound doctrine. . . . In all things showing thyself an ensample of good works; in thy doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sound speech (*λόγον ὑγιᾶς*)" etc. (comp. too ch. v. 17; 2 Tim. i. 13). Manner of life (*ἀναστροφή*; see ch. iii. 15, note). Purity (*ἀγνεία*); elsewhere in the New Testament only in ch. v. 2, where it

has the same special sense (compare *ἀγνός*, 2 Cor. xi. 2; ch. v. 22; Titus ii. 5; 1 Pet. iii. 2).

Ver. 13.—*Heed for attendance*, A.V.; *teaching for doctrine*, A.V. Till I come (ch. iii. 14; i. 3). Reading (*τῇ ἀναγνώσει*). The public reading of the Scriptures (the Lessons, as we should say). This we know was the practice in the synagogue (Luke iv. 16, etc.; Acts xiii. 27; xv. 21; 2 Cor. iii. 15). We see the beginning of reading the New Testament in the Christian assemblies in Eph. iii. 4; and Col. iv. 16; and generally in the fact of Eristles being addressed by the apostles to Churches. The *ἀναγνώστης*, the reader, lector, was a regular order in the third and fourth centuries (Bingham, vol. i. p. 288). The office is being revived in our day. Exhortation (*τῇ παρακλήσει*); see Acts iv. 36, where Barnabas's name is interpreted as meaning "Son of exhortation" (R.V.), and xiii. 15; comp. Rom. xii. 7 (where, as here, *πρόκλησις* and *διδασκαλία* are coupled together); 1 Thess. ii. 3, etc. Teaching (*διδασκαλία*); almost always rendered "doctrine" in the A.V. But here, where the act of teaching (like the act of reading, the act of exhorting, in the two preceding clauses) is intended, "teaching" is perhaps the best word according to our modern usage. As regards the difference between *διδασκαλία* and *πρόκλησις*, the former would express "doctrinal teaching," whether of dogma or of precept, the latter entreaties to believe the one and practise the other (see Acts xi. 23 and xiv. 22 for good examples of *πρόκλησις*).

Ver. 14.—The gift (*χάρισμα*). The verb *χαρίζομαι* means "to give anything freely," gratuitously, of mere good will, without any payment or return (Luke vii. 42; Acts xxvii. 24; Rom. viii. 32; 1 Cor. ii. 12, etc.). Hence *χάρισμα* came to be especially applied to the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are pre-eminently "free gifts" (see Acts viii. 20). It is so applied in Rom. i. 11; xii. 6; 1 Cor. i. 7; xii. 4, 9, 28, 30, 31; 1 Pet. iv. 10. Here, then, as in the similar passage, 2 Tim. i. 6, the "gift" spoken of is the special grace given by the Holy Ghost to those who are separated for "the office and work of a priest in the Church of God by the imposition of hands" (Ordering of Priests). This gift St. Paul bids him not neglect (*μὴ ἀμέλει*). The word contains the idea of contemptuous neglect—neglect as of an unimportant thing. In Matt. xxii. 5 the persons invited to the feast made light of it, and went away to other things which they cared more about. In Heb. ii. 3, *τηλικαύτης ἀμελήσαντες σωτηρίας*, and viii. 9, imply a contemptuous disregard. So here Timothy is reminded that in his ordination he received a great *χάρισμα*, and that he must value it duly, and use it diligently. It must not be let lie slumbering

and smouldering, but must be stirred up into a flame. The lesson here and in 2 Tim. i. 6 seems to be that we must look back to our ordination, and to the spiritual grace given in it, as things not exhausted. The grace is there, but it must not be lightly thought of. Which was given thee by prophecy. This seems to be explained by Acts xiii. 1—3, where Barnabas and Saul were separated for their work by the laying on of the hands apparently of the prophets and teachers, at the express command of the Holy Ghost, speaking doubtless by the mouth of one of the prophets. Timothy, it appears, was designated for his work by a like command of the Holy Ghost, speaking by one of the Church prophets, and received his commission by a like "laying on of hands" by the elders of the Church. If St. Paul refers, as he appears to do, to the same occasion in 2 Tim. i. 6, then it appears that he laid his hands on Timothy, together with the presbyters, as is done by the bishop in the ordination of priests. The presbytery (*τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου*). The word is borrowed from the Jewish nomenclature (see Luke xxii. 6; Acts xxii. 5). In a slightly different sense for "the office of a presbyter," Sus., v. 50 (Cod. Alex.).

Ver. 15.—*Be diligent in for meditate upon*, A.V.; *progress for profiting*, A.V.; *be manifest unto for appear to*, A.V. Be diligent, etc. (*ταῦτα μελέτα*). Give all your attention and care and study to these things. It is just the contrary to *μὴ ἀμέλει* in ver. 14. The verb *μελέτω*, besides this passage, occurs in its classical sense of "premeditating" or "getting up a speech," in Mark xiii. 11 (where, however, the reading is doubtful), and again in Acts iv. 23, in the sense of "premeditating" certain actions. A kindred use in classical Greek is "to practise" or "exercise" an art, as rhetoric, dancing, shooting with a bow, and the like. It is very common in the LXX., in the sense of "meditating," practising in the thoughts. Give thyself wholly to them (*ἐν τούτοις ἰσθί*); literally, *be in these things*; i.e. be wholly and always occupied with them. The similar phrases in Greek and Latin classics are *Ἐν τούτοις δ' αἰσῶν ἦν* (Plutarch); "Omnis in hoc sum" (Hor., 'Ep.' i. 1. 1); "Nescio quid meditans nugarum, et totus in illis" (Hor., 'Sat.', i. 9. 2); and in the LXX., *Ἐν φόβῳ Κυρίου ἰσθί ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν* (Prov. xxiii. 17). Thy progress (*ἡ προκοπή*). Progress, advance, or growth, is the idea of *προκοπή*. It is used twice in Phil. i. 12, 25. A good example of its use in classical Greek is that in Polyb., iii. 4, *Ἀβέησις καὶ προκοπή τῆς Ρωμαίων δυναστείας*. The use of the verb *προκόπτω* for "to advance," "make progress," is still more common (Luke ii. 52; Rom. xiii. 12; Gal. i. 14; 2 Tim. ii. 16; iii. 9, 14).⁶ It is used

equally of progress in good or evil. Unto all. The R.T. reads *πᾶσι* for *ἐν πᾶσι* in the T.R., which may be rendered either "to [or, 'among'] all persons" or "in all things."

Ver. 16.—*To* for *unto*, A.V. (twice); *thy teaching for the doctrine*, A.V.; *these things for them*, A.V.; *save both for both save*, A.V. Take heed (*ἑρεχέ*); as in Acts iii. 5 (see too Luke xiv. 7). *Thy teaching*. The A.V., *the doctrine*, is the better rendering, though the difference of meaning is very slight. The use of *ἡ διδασκαλία* in ch. vi. 1 and 3 and Titus ii. 10 strongly supports the sense of "doctrine," i.e. the thing taught (see note on ver. 13). *Continue in these things* (*ἐπιμεινε αὐτοῖς*); comp. Acts xiii. 43; Rom. vi. 1; xi. 22, 23; Col. i. 23. It is impossible to give a satisfactory solution to the

question—What does *αὐτοῖς* refer to? It seems to me necessarily to refer to what *immediately* precedes, viz. *σεαυτῷ καὶ τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ*, and so to refer rather to the sense of the words than to the exact grammar. The things which he was to "take heed to" were his own conduct and example (included in *σεαυτῷ*) and the doctrine which he preached; and in a steady continuance in these things—faithful living and faithful teaching—he would save both himself and his hearers. The application of the words to the *ταῦτα* of ver. 15, or to all the things enumerated from ver. 12 onwards, or, taken as a masculine, to the *Ephesians*, or the *hearers*, as variously proposed by eminent commentators, seems alike impossible.

HOMILETICS.

Vers. 1—16.—*Latter-day apostasies*. The history of the Christian Church is the history of the sowing of tares as well as of the sowing of good grain; and it describes the work of seducing spirits as well as that of the Spirit of God. The work of heresy is not merely the denial of true doctrine, but it is the invention and propagation of a multitude of false doctrines. Nor, again, are the false doctrines so invented and promulgated, on the face of them, necessarily ungodly doctrines. On the contrary, they often assume to themselves to be holier, stricter, more heavenly doctrines, than those of the Church of God. The Church of God is not holy enough for these spirit-taught separatists; the precepts of Jesus Christ do not attain a standard high enough for their exalted aspirations; the apostles do but grovel in the dust of commonplace piety, while these self-sent teachers soar to the heights of the true knowledge of the Infinite! But not only does Church history record the rise, in a lamentable succession, of the various troublers of the spiritual Israel, the men who have done more to hinder God's work on earth than all the persecutors and atheists put together have accomplished—the Cerinthus, and Marcions, and Montanuses, and Manicheuses, and Socinuses, and countless other sectaries of later times—but the spirit of prophecy revealed beforehand for the Church's warning that so it should be. The Holy Ghost, in no obscure or doubtful words, made it known to the Church that there would be apostasies many and grievous from the faith once delivered to the saints, that the leaders of those apostasies would be seducing spirits—spirits of antichrist, as St. John has it—and that some of them at least would put on the hypocritical appearance of greater holiness, for the purpose of the better deceiving the hearts of the simple. Thus while Christ taught by his apostle that "marriage is honourable in all," these forbade to marry; while the Word of God declared that "every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving," these commanded "to abstain from meats," saying, "Touch not, taste not, handle not." The Word of God teaches that God gives us richly all things to enjoy; these enjoined every kind of austerity to the body—"bodily exercises" which profited little. The Word of God bids us approach boldly to the throne of grace through the mediation of Jesus Christ; these would keep men back from God, and substitute, in the name of humility, the worship of angels. And that these pernicious doctrines were not confined to the first ages of the Church, the history of the Church too sadly teaches. The most opposite forms of heresy which have in all ages distracted the Church have always had this in common, that, pretending to improve upon the sound, sober, and wise teaching of the Word of God, they have corrupted and forsaken it. Enforced celibacy for pure-minded chastity; artificial rules of abstinence for habitual temperance and self-restraint; grovelling saint and image worship for direct communion with the living God; self-righteous separation from the world for holy living in the world; bruising the body for mortifying the soul; pretentious rejection of wealth for self-denying use of it; leaving the state of life in which God has placed a man, instead

of adorning the gospel in it; making those things to be sins which God has not made sins, and those things to be virtues which God has not made virtues;—these have ever been the characteristics of those “doctrines of devils,” the purpose of which is to turn the simple away from the truth. “The good minister of Jesus Christ” must hold his course boldly and straightforwardly in the teeth of all such false doctrine. He must not parley with the teachers of heresy, nor mix the wine of the gospel with the water of falsehood. He knows that the Word of God is purer, and holier, and wiser, and higher, than all the subtleties of human invention, and will stand in its glory when they are all swept away into nothingness. And, knowing this, he must give himself wholly to teaching the truth, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear; being fully assured that in so doing he will both save himself and them that hear him.

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Vers. 1, 2.—*A predicted apostasy in the Christian Church.* In opposition to this exhibition of the mystery of godliness, the apostle places the prediction of a serious apostasy from the faith.

I. THE APOSTASY IS A SUBJECT OF EXPRESS PREDICTION. “But the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in after times some shall depart from the faith.” It may seem strange that apostasy should be thought of so soon after the foundation of Christianity, but the Church is fully forewarned of the coming danger. It was foretold, not obscurely, but expressly, in the prophecies by Daniel (vii. 25; viii. 23), of our Lord (Matt. xxiv. 4, 11), and of the apostle himself (2 Thess. ii.; Acts xx. 29, 30; Col. ii.). But he here alludes more specifically to a development of error in the future, the germs of which he discerns in the present.

II. THE TIME OF ITS APPEARANCE. “In after times.” The words signify any period subsequent to the age in which the apostle lived, for he saw in the apostasy of the present the beginning of a still more serious apostasy in the future. The mystery of iniquity had already begun to work. But it would project its evil shadow far forward into the dispensation, in many various forms.

III. THE EXTENT OF THE APOSTASY. “Some shall depart from the faith.” 1. *Some, not all.* Not the whole visible Church, but a considerable part of it. Thus an assurance is given that the true Church of God shall not be extinguished. 2. *The apostasy is from the doctrine of faith—though it be the mystery of godliness—not the grace of faith,* which, being of an incorruptible origin, cannot be lost. Christ is the Author and Finisher of faith. The elect cannot be finally deceived. The doctrine of faith was to be corrupted by “denying what was true, by adding what was false.”

IV. THE REASON OR PROCESS OF THE APOSTASY. “Giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.” The prime movers were not false teachers, but unseen agents in the spirit-world. 1. *Man does not stand isolated in this world.* If he is not influenced by the Holy Spirit, he is influenced by the spirits of delusion, who are the emissaries of Satan. If we are not possessed by the truth, error will make an easy conquest of us. Often the heart that is made empty by scepticism is the most ready to welcome superstition. 2. *It is possible for evil spirits to influence the human mind.* (1) Satan could tempt David to number the people (1 Chron. xxi. 1). As the father of lies, the suggestion of error would be a congenial work. The coming of the man of sin is to be after the working of Satan. (2) There is a sacrifice to devils, a communion with devils, a cup of devils, a table of devils (1 Cor. x. 20, 21). There is a spiritual wickedness in high places capable of compassing great destruction by error. (3) The apostle teaches the personality of such evil spirits. (4) There is no more difficulty in understanding their communication of thought to man, than in understanding the communication of thought from one evil man to another. An evil man can communicate evil by a glance of his eye. But if the Spirit of God can, without the intervention of the senses, influence the minds of believers, it is easy to understand that seducing spirits can have access to the centres of thought and feeling without any similar intervention.

V. THE CHARACTER OF THE FALSE TEACHERS UNDER SUCH EVIL INSPIRATION. “In the hypocrisy of speakers of lies, being branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron.” 1. *They assumed a mask of holiness which they did not possess, with the view*

of giving better currency to their lies. Their assumed sanctity would throw the unwary off their guard, and lead to the confounding of truth with error. The lies they taught were that holiness was to be attained through abstinence from marriage and particular kinds of food. 2. *They were essentially corrupt*, for their conscience had become so seared through transgression that they had lost the true distinctions between right and wrong, error and truth. They were incapable of relishing the "mystery of godliness," and therefore devoted themselves to the arts of religious seduction in the interests of an essentially unspiritual asceticism.—T. C.

Vers. 3—5.—*The practical features of the apostasy.* The apostle does not enumerate the doctrinal errors of the apostates, but touches upon two practical characteristics which would fall under general observation.

I. THERE WAS A PROHIBITION OR RESTRAINT UPON MARRIAGE. "Forbidding to marry." 1. *This was an ascetic tendency already manifested in the East*, especially among the Essenes of Palestine and the Therapeutæ of Egypt. 2. *It may have already influenced Christian opinion in the Corinthian Church*; for the apostle is obliged to solve spiritualistic doubts regarding marriage (1 Cor. vii.). 3. *The tendency developed in less than a century into a Gnostic contempt for marriage.* 4. *It entered patristic theology in the form of an exaggerated admiration for virginity*, to the disparagement of married life. 5. *It developed inside the Latin and Greek Churches into the celibacy of the clergy and the religious orders.* 6. *It was a tendency wholly opposed to Scripture teaching.* (1) It forbade what Scripture allowed: "Marriage is honourable in all" (Heb. xiii. 2). (2) It forbade the marriage of ministers, while Old Testament priests and New Testament ministers were to be "husbands of one wife" (ch. iii. 2). "Have we not power to lead about a wife, a sister?" (1 Cor. ix. 5). Several of the apostles made use of this power: "As well as other apostles, . . . and Cephas." (3) The reason why the apostle says so little here concerning the restriction on marriage, and so much on that respecting meats, is probably because the one was so manifestly opposed to the whole plan of creation, that the common sense of men would reject it as unnatural and wrong. Perhaps, also, the one tendency had not assumed so definite a form as the other. The very liberty allowed under the gospel to abstain from marriage was not grounded on the idea of the superior holiness of celibacy or virginity, but on its affording in special circumstances greater opportunities and freedom for spiritual work (1 Cor. vii. 32—37).

II. THERE WAS A PROHIBITION OR RESTRAINT UPON THE USE OF CERTAIN KINDS OF FOOD. "And commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving by them who believe and know the truth." Probably the restriction was as to the use of flesh. The Essenes and the Therapeutæ abstained from particular kinds of food. The Gnostic schools developed the tendency still more, and in due time it was stereotyped into the penitential usages of Romanism. The apostle argues strenuously against this abuse. 1. *It was contrary to God's design in creation.* (1) All food was from the hand of the Maker; nothing was therefore to be accounted common or unclean under the gospel. (2) All food was good. "For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused." It was not, therefore, for man to place restrictions upon what God had given with such a liberal hand for his use. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." 2. *The conditions under which the true design of God in creation is fulfilled.* (1) The food was for all creatures; but "believers and those who have known the truth" had a covenant right to it, and the true end of creation was only fully satisfied in them. (2) The right manner of receiving the food provided. "If it be received with thanksgiving;" for it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer. This implies (a) that food is to be gratefully received as God's gift; (b) that our thanksgiving is presented on the objective side by the Word of God, and on the subjective side by prayer. Thus the custom of grace before and after meat is grounded in a Divine command.—T. C.

Vers. 6, 7.—*The due equipment and duties of a minister of Christ.* I. THE MINISTER MUST BE ALWAYS TEACHING. "By setting forth these things to the brethren, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ." It was the duty of Timothy to counsel the brethren at Ephesus concerning the present signs of the coming apostasy, and to instruct them how they should counteract its mischiefs. It is probable that some at Ephesus

had already been betrayed by ascetic seductions into an unhealthy mode of life. Timothy was to be mindful of the present truth and the present error.

II. THE MINISTER MUST BE ALWAYS LEARNING. "Nourishing thyself up in the words of the faith and of the good instruction which thou hast diligently followed." 1. *There must be a continuous and permanent process of self-instruction*, as the tense of the participle signifies. The minister must never cease to learn, because he has to set the truth in new lights, and to counteract error out of the large storehouse of Divine truth. 2. *The minister's armoury is the Word of faith and good instruction thoroughly mastered.* (1) Nothing but God's Word received by faith will enable Timothy to fight the battle of truth. He is not to overcome in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. (2) He is to adhere faithfully to the truth already attained. Progress in knowledge does not imply a constant changing of opinions.

III. THE MINISTER MUST BE ALWAYS WORKING TOWARD A PROFITABLE RESULT. "But the profane and old wives' fables avoid, and rather exercise thyself unto godliness." 1. *Negatively, the minister is to avoid foolish and unprofitable studies.* The apostle referred to fables familiarly known, Jewish in origin, perhaps with a mixture of Gentile theosophy, which were morally unfruitful, but practically dangerous as preparing the way for the apostasy of the future. The minister must himself stand free from all sympathy with such injurious formalism as was embodied in the rabbinical studies, as leading to the neglect of the weightier matters of the Law. 2. *Positively, the minister is to exercise himself unto godliness.* (1) This implies that godliness is a pursuit that demands the strenuous application of all our energies of mind, body, and spirit. (2) It implies that godliness must be the chief business of a minister as well as the chief aim of his life to promote it among the members of his flock. (a) It has its inner seat in the heart. (b) It works outward into the life. (c) It is a progressive state. (d) It was the one chief concern of the apostle himself. "One thing I do."—T. C.

Vers. 8, 9.—*The advantage of true godliness.* The apostle gives a reason for his exhortation to godliness.

II. THE SUPERIORITY OF GODLINESS TO ANY MERE BODILY EXERCISE. "For bodily exercise profiteth to a small extent." 1. *The allusion here is not to the ascetic discipline already noticed*, because: (1) Though it might apply to the more developed austerities of later times—flagellations, pilgrimages, and weary vigils—it cannot fairly apply to the disuse of marriage and of certain kinds of food. There is no bodily exercise implied in such a quiescent habit or aspect of life. (2) It is impossible to think that the apostle should even concede that such austerity was profitable to the smallest extent, for he is opposed to the whole idea of it. (3) Besides, this was not the immediate subject in hand, which was the excellence of true piety. 2. *The allusion is to the gymnastic training which occupied so much of the time and energy of the Greek youth.* It was profitable for the healthful development of bodily life, but by its very nature it was both temporal and temporary in its results and its rewards.

II. THE GROUND OF THE SUPERIORITY OF GODLINESS. "But godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." It has the profit and the promise of a double life. 1. *It has the profit and the promise of this present life.* (1) There is the promise of length of days. "The wicked live not half their days." (2) There is the prophetic promise that they "shall inherit the earth." (3) There is the profit (a) of a good name, (b) of riches and honour; for they will want no good thing. (4) Godliness is profitable for all things included in the scheme of a holy life. 2. *It has the profit and the promise of the life to come.* (1) This does not signify that it merits eternal life, but that it is essentially connected with it in the Divine scheme of salvation. (2) Thus godliness is "great gain" for the whole life of man in the next life. It involves the highest blessedness of man. (3) Happy is the man whose future is provided for as well as his present.

III. CORROBORATION OF THE APOSTLE'S ASSERTION RESPECTING GODLINESS. "Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptance." It was a truth of universal acceptance among Christian people, because, in spite of all the drawbacks of a persecuting time, it had been happily realized in their checkered experience.—T. C.

Vers. 10.—*The practical effects of this truth in apostolic experience.* Looking to the

realization of this promise, the apostle reminds Timothy how he was borne up by it in all his labour and suffering.

I. ITS SUSTAINING EFFICACY. "For to this end do we labour and suffer reproach."

1. *The apostle did not regard the life promised to godliness as one of mere corporeal enjoyment.* 2. *His life was actually one of severe and toilsome labour as well as of trying but unmerited reproach.* 3. *Yet he was stimulated to increased toil and supported under the infliction of unjust reproach by the thought of the promise involved in the life of true godliness.*

II. THE SOLID BASIS OF CHRISTIAN EXPECTATION UNDER TOIL AND SHAME. "Because we have set our hope upon the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe." 1. *The blessed nature and continuity of this hope.* (1) It is the good hope through grace which we enjoy. (2) Life would be a blank without it. "If in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable." (3) It is linked with patience. "But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Rom. vii. 25). (4) It is a permanent and continuous hope, as the tense of the verb here signifies. 2. *The ground or basis of this hope.* "Upon the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe." (1) This hope is from the "God of hope" (Rom. xv. 13), who is the living God; that is, no mere God of imagination, but a real personal Agent, the very Fountain of life in infinite sufficiency. (2) It is a hope linked to salvation in its widest sense—both "the life that now is, and that which is to come." For God is "the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe." (a) The Saviourship here has relation to the two lives of men, as expressed in the context. In the one sense, God is a Saviour of all men, since by his watchful and sustaining providence he preserves them from destruction; in the other, he offers and bestows eternal life. (b) The words do not warrant the Universalist conclusion that all men will be ultimately saved. The passage makes an express distinction between all "men" and "believers" inconsistent with this view.—T. C.

Vers. 11, 12.—*A series of admonitions for the guidance of Timothy.* I. TIMOTHY IS ENJOINED TO EXERCISE A DUE AUTHORITY. "These things command and teach." He is to instruct the Church at Ephesus with all authority in all that concerned the nature of true piety, the dangers to be guarded against, and the duties to be faithfully discharged.

II. TIMOTHY IS ENJOINED TO CULTIVATE A GRAVITY OF DEPORTMENT THAT WOULD MAKE HIS YOUTH RESPECTED. "Let no man despise thy youth." 1. *Timothy was only relatively a young man.* It is highly probable that he was very young when he first joined the apostle (Acts xvi. 1—3)—perhaps nearly twenty-five years of age—and as eleven years had since intervened, he would probably now be about forty years old. 2. As Timothy had to give counsel to persons much older than himself (ch. v. 1), and even to call them to account (ver. 19), it was necessary that he should cultivate a gravity of manner that would admit of his age being forgotten. Perhaps, also, as he was of a rather timid disposition—more disposed to obey than to command—the counsel of the apostle was more needed. He must be firm and manly, and destitute of every aspect or element of pretentious assumption.

III. TIMOTHY IS ENJOINED TO BECOME A PATTERN TO ALL BELIEVERS. "But become thou a pattern of the believers in word, in behaviour, in love, in faith, in purity." Thus would he counteract any disadvantage arising from his youth. He was to be a pattern in all the leading characteristics of the Christian minister. 1. "In word." (1) As to his public teaching, which must be according to God's Word, showing in it uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that could not be condemned. (2) As to social intercourse, which must be (a) not corrupt, vain, or foolish; (b) but always with grace, seasoned with salt—wise, grave, edifying. 2. "In behaviour." In the Church, the family, the world, he must maintain a deportment becoming the gospel of Christ, in all godliness and honesty, with simplicity and godly sincerity, so as to stop the mouths of gainsayers and earn a good report from them that are without. 3. "In love, in faith." These are the two motive forces of the Christian life to influence both the speech and conduct of the minister. The one is set in motion by the other; for "faith worketh by love." (1) He is to be a pattern in love to God and man, without which, even if he has the tongue of angels, he is nothing. (2) In faith, in the grace of faith, in the doctrine

of faith, in the profession of faith. 4. "*In purity.*" The minister must be pure in life, in thought, in language, and in all his relations to the world.—T. C.

Ver. 13.—*The duties of Timothy's public ministry.* The apostle urges him to the diligent exercise of his calling. "Till I come give attention to the reading, the exhortation, the teaching."

I. THE READING. This referred to the public reading of the Scriptures in the Church. The Old Testament Scriptures, and probably part of the New Testament, would thus be read at such meeting of the saints. This reading was necessary because (1) the Scriptures were the sources of all religious knowledge; (2) the test or standard of doctrine by which opinions were to be tried; (3) the means of sanctification (John xvii. 17); (4) the spring of Christian hope and comfort (Rom. xv. 13).

II. THE EXHORTATION. This refers to public ministry. Timothy was practically to enforce the duties of Christian life out of the Scriptures.

III. THE TEACHING. This refers to the matter of doctrinal instruction. Thus full provision would be made for building up the saints in their most holy faith, and in all the graces and virtues of a holy life.—T. C.

Ver. 14.—*The duty of improving the Divine gifts of exhortation and teaching.* "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee through prophecy, with laying on of the hands of the presbytery."

I. THE SPIRITUAL GIFT CONFERRED ON TIMOTHY. 1. *It is not mere intellectual equipment, nor the mere possession of Divine grace, but the gift which qualified Timothy for preaching the gospel.* "For the work of an evangelist." It was a gift of interpreting the Scriptures, of dispensing the mysteries of grace with edification, of bringing forth things new and old out of the good treasure of a holy heart informed with truth. 2. *It was a gift conferred by means of prophecy.* The Holy Spirit had, by one or more of the prophets, declared his will to confer this gift upon Timothy. The prophecy was the Divine assurance as to Timothy's qualifications. 3. *The response to this Divine act is signified by the action of the presbytery in formally designating him to his special ministerial work.*

II. THE DUTY OF EXERCISING AND IMPROVING THIS GIFT. "Neglect not the gift that is in thee." There were several reasons to enforce this duty. 1. *The prophetic declaration accompanied by the concurrence of the whole body of presbyters* would fill his mind with a sense of his high privilege and great responsibility in the possession of such a gift. 2. *The exercise of a gift is the only method of preventing its complete lapse.* The disuse of a limb causes it to decay. All faculties must be kept bright and vivid by constant exercise. 3. *Our Lord, by the parable of the talents, teaches us the sin and danger of hiding our talent uselessly in the ground.*—T. C.

Vers. 15, 16.—*The necessity of a minister giving his whole energies to his work.* The apostle here concludes his solemn instructions to his chosen representative at Ephesus.

I. THE DUTY OF BEING MINDFUL AND DEVOTED TO ONE'S MINISTRY. "These things do thou care for: be in them." 1. *A minister's heart ought to be anxious about his work.* It is this anxiety that secures the efficiency of work in this world. But the minister's concern is full of an inspiring zeal for God's honour, and is sustained by encouraging promises of help from on high. 2. *A minister ought to devote himself exclusively to his work.* "Be in them." The obstacles to this devotion are (1) slothfulness, (2) worldliness, (3) the pressure of duties right in themselves, but lying outside the sphere of the ministry.

II. THE MOTIVE FOR THIS EXCLUSIVE DEVOTION. "That thy progress may appear to all." 1. *This does not imply that Timothy was to have exclusive regard to his right standing with the Church.* This might be a questionable motive. 2. *It implies that his devotion to his work should be so altogether conspicuous that it could not but be seen by all.*

III. THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE PERSONAL LIFE AND THE OFFICIAL WORK OF THE MINISTER. "Take heed to thyself and to the teaching; continue in them: for in so doing thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee." 1. *The direct object of the minister of the gospel is the salvation of souls.* 2. *This salvation comes by hearing*

the gospel. "Faith cometh by hearing." 3. *It is the duty of the minister to persevere with a pious insistency on all the objects of his ministry.* "Continue in them." 4. *Nothing is so well adapted for the salvation of ministers as their pious labours in behalf of the salvation of others.* 5. *There is to be a double service in this ministry.* The minister must first look well to his life, exemplifying the holiness of the gospel in word and deed (ver. 12); and then his teaching must be good (ver. 6) and salutary (ch. i. 10). Thus he will be the instrument of much good; he will thus cover the multitude of sins, and save a soul from death (Jas. v. 20).—T. C.

Ver. 4.—*A false asceticism.* "For every creature of God is good." The gospel stood in a difficult position. On the one hand was asceticism, with its hermits of every creed, and its retreats in Asia, Africa, and Egypt; on the other hand was Epicureanism with its philosophy of enjoyments, which ran into lawless excess. We must judge a new religion by its first teacher; for Christ was his own religion alive and in action. John the Baptist was an ascetic; but Christ came eating and drinking, and his enemies said, "Behold, a wine-bibber, and a friend of publican and sinners." His first miracle was at a marriage festival, and he dined with the Pharisees. We have here an example in morals. Every creature or creation—not necessarily a living thing—is good. Show that it is from God, and then it *must* be good. In the story of Creation, after every new day, "God saw that it was good."

I. ASCETICISM MAKES A FALSE WORLD OF ITS OWN. It narrows life, it empties the fountains of joy, it destroys the hopes of youth, it degrades the body, and treats matter as though it were evil. God's idea of life is that body, soul, and spirit are to be redeemed.

II. THE CHRISTIAN FAITH MAKES A TRUE WORLD OF MEN. We are to be trained through use, even when use is dangerous; for test makes manhood. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation." We are to have the analogy in Nature. She is to stand the storm, and be strengthened by it. So the atmosphere is purified, so the roots of the trees take faster hold of the soil. What a world of disease and death this would be without currents and waves and storms!

III. THE CHRISTIAN FAITH HAD FALSE INTERPRETERS. It could but be that the surrounding tendencies affected the Christians. Just as there were Judaistic Christians, so there were those affected by the old Manichean doctrine "that matter was evil." Consequently they would treat the body as corrupt and evil. The apostle, therefore, is not only general, but specific in his statement, "Some forbid to marry and forbid to eat meats;" and he repeats the expression, "which God hath created." The same tendency appeared, and was fatally developed, in the monastic life of the Church. The monk and the nun appeared to possess a special sanctity, but it was not really so. The forces of nature, if they have not pure avenues of enjoyment, will be sure to find impure channels; and history shows that monasteries have been associated with hidden vice and criminal deeds of shame, though softened over with vesper chants and morbid garments of melancholy hue.—W. M. S.

Ver. 4.—*A universal use.* "And nothing to be refused." The apostle has shown that government is a creation of God; we are to pray for kings and all in authority, and this is acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour. And he has taught us to obey the powers that be; for they are ordained of God. He has shown that the place of man in the Creation is of God. A woman's lot is not to be the world's leader or teacher, but the equal companion of man. All social economies break to pieces that deny God's ordinations in the universe. No order that he has created is to be refused.

TO REFUSE IS TO IMPLY A SUPERIOR JUDGMENT TO THAT OF GOD. The wisest must know best. He who is from everlasting to everlasting has given a revelation for all aspects of society and all ages of men. Individual liberty is left. We are not to forbid to marry or to command to abstain from meats; though, if any thought the meat was offered to idols, and that they sanctioned idolatry, they might refuse it; as our temperance friends think that when use runs to abuse, and is a stumbling-block, they have a perfect right to use liberty of abstinence. "Nothing to be refused." Wonderful words! The imagination of the mind is a creation of God. Poetry, affection, and art alike may be used in the Christian sphere. The intellect of the wise is a

creation of God; it is not to be blindfolded. We are not to say, as Rome said to Galileo, "Faith does not inquire;" but we are to use it in its own sphere, reverently looking up to God for more light. "Come, and let us reason together, saith the Lord." All natural beauty is of God. It is no sign of religion to love ugliness. Only let your beauty not be meretricious beauty. Let it be pure, as God is pure. "Nothing to be refused."—W. M. S.

Ver. 4.—*A grateful heart.* "If it be received with thanksgiving." We are always to be conscious of dependence, or else our very blessings turn to curses. We become full, and we deny God. There is a prosperity without God which makes men proud and hard. Men lose the consciousness of the transitoriness of earthly good, and of their entire dependence upon God. We are, therefore, to live in an atmosphere of gratitude. We are not to receive mercies as though we had a right to them, but always, as Paul says, "Be ye thankful."

I. THINK OF THE THOUGHT MANIFESTED IN THESE GIFTS. Every student of nature becomes surprised that beauty is born out of such strange elements, and that there should be such harmony of forces that, taken alone, would be terribly destructive. God's thoughts are, toward us, precious thoughts, spoken in all ages by holy men, and symbolized in the world of nature. God has thought out all that is needful for our life. He has stored the earth, interlaced it with rich metallic veins, filled it with limestone and coal, that all might be ready for his child. And in grace we see how God promised a Saviour, and, when his Son came into the world, "all things are now ready."

II. THINK OF THE FORBEARANCE THAT CONTINUES THEM. Men have abused God's mercies. If men destroy the nobleman's shrubs, he closes his grounds. If men deface the pictures, the galleries are no longer free. And yet God bears with all the sin and frailty of man; and from generation to generation this is the thought that should move man most—not only the forgiveness, but the forbearance, of God.

III. THINK OF THE PLEASURES RECEIVED FROM THEM. What millionfold ministrations of pleasure there are! What has not nature been to you, and love, and thought, and home! There is no more wonderful contemplation than the varied pleasures of heart and mind.

IV. THINK OF THE UNCREATIVE POWER OF MAN. We cannot create an atom; we can only readjust and combine. And the artist cannot create his colours; he can only mix them. The physician cannot create his remedies; he can only find them. The builder cannot create his stones, he can only quarry them. The child can gather the flower; but a whole universe of men cannot give it life again. Let every creation of God be received with thanksgiving.—W. M. S.

Ver. 5.—*Creation sanctified.* "For it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer." Here, then, is an exquisite harmony. We have been talking of creation, and now we come to consider the Word of God. And these creative things are to be "sanctified by the Word of God and prayer." Men can talk with God. His fellowship is a test of all our pleasures and companionships and associations—"Would the Bible be out of place here?" It is never out of place in nature's gardens and groves. The best descriptions of nature are in the Bible. It is never out of place in pure festivities. It records the marriage supper, and the music and the dance when the prodigal came home. It is never out of place in children's joys; for it gives the picture of a glad and happy childhood. The prophet says, "The streets of the city shall be full of girls and boys playing;" and Christ took up little children in his arms, and blessed them. It is never out of place in pure human love; for that is poetized in one entire book of the Bible. It is not out of place in the earnest pursuit of secular things; for the proverbs appeal to personal endeavour, and to the right enjoyment of riches and honour. The Bible sanctifies life from the cradle to the grave, and any social economy apart from the Word of God is only a paper defence against tyranny and wrong. "And prayer." For we may speak to God. The neutral face of nature is ghastly without him. "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth." Can I ask God to be there at all? Can I ask him to aid me in my work? Can I ask him to comfort me if I fail? Can I ask him to quicken my powers and enlarge my opportunities? Can I ask him to sanctify my

associations? These are vital questions; for nothing is sanctified without him, and everything is "sanctified by the Word of God and prayer."—W. M. S.

Ver. 6.—*A wise reminder.* "If thou put the brethren in remembrance." We cannot create truth, any more than the artist can create nature. Revelation is not imagination. A teacher can combine, harmonize, reproduce, and call to remembrance. Timothy cannot add to the gospel. In the eleventh verse of the first chapter it is called "the glorious gospel, which was committed to my trust." A trustee does not alter the will, neither does he add to it. All that he has to do is sacredly to carry out the last wishes of the testator. And when Christ had finished the gospel by his ascension, then he sent them into all the world to preach it.

I. THE CHURCH A BROTHERHOOD. "Put the brethren." Here is no priestly domination, no hierarchical pretension. 1. *Brotherhood in service.* We may have different functions, but we are all servants. We have it in type in the great Servant, "who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." We ought never to be ashamed of service. The old guilds in England were beautiful things. It is a pity now that retirement is thought more honourable than service. 2. *Brotherhood in sympathy.* The most precious element in life is the sentiment of pity. Some men despise sentiment; but without it you take away the atmosphere of life, as in nature atmosphere is the drapery of the hills and the haze of the mountains. This sympathy is subtle, not merely spoken, but breathed in tones and glances at us in looks of thoughtful love. It is an angel of help, always swift to help, and ready to fly to sorrow. Shakespeare calls it "Heaven's cherubim horsed." 3. *Brotherhood in pilgrimage.* In Church life there will be absence of mere etiquette and ceremony. It will be a contrast to the world. It will not be easy to come and go from a true pilgrim Church. Pride may not care for it; fashion, in its novelistic literature, may laugh at it; but the Christian knows that there is something strengthening in the fellowship of the saints.

II. THE GOSPEL A REMEMBRANCE. "Put them in remembrance;" because of their preoccupation. Business life, the cares of home, make us forget the heavenly Word. Too often the angels of God stand outside the heart. In a busy age like the present there is nothing men so much need as quiet hours for the quickening of memory. "Remembrance;" because of familiarity. As the Swiss mountaineer thinks little of the beauty which the traveller goes miles upon miles to see, so the gospel has been round about our childhood and youth, and there is a danger lest we make light of that which is so familiar to our thought. "Remembrance;" because of pride. We forget that we need the gospel, and once felt ourself to be chief of sinners; forget that we were slaves, and can now go back and take up the broken chains of old sins. "Remembrance;" because we may seek to make a new religion for ourselves. Earnestness may take the forms of Pharisaism and asceticism; we may try Emersonian self-dependence. We are to remember that the gospel of the grace of God is what we all need unto the end.—W. M. S.

Ver. 6.—*Ministerial vocation.* "Thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained." Taking your own medicines. Eating the bread you recommend. A good horticulturist will show you his own garden. The test, therefore, of Christian faith and good doctrine is—being nourished up.

I. IT MAKES MEN STRONG TO ENDURE. Ministers are men of like passions with others; as Shakespeare says—

"We are all men!
In our own nature, frail, incapable
Of our flesh, few are angels."

Paul realized all this himself, and said, "We are men of like passions with yourselves." In the daily conflict, the soul that is nourished up and made strong in Christ can "endure as seeing him who is invisible."

II. MADE STRONG TO ENJOY. Full of deep and quiet joy. It is a poor strength that can merely show self-denial! There must be self-exercise—the ability to show that life in God leads to a ministry of service that shall be full of heart and hope.

TIMOTHY.

III. MADE STRONG TO TESTIFY. "Nourished up in the words of faith," so as not merely to expound them or to give elaborate exegesis of doctrine, but to live out the heavenly truths. Timothy was to attain unto this, and to let no man despise his youth, because age alone is not wisdom, and Paul speaks of him as having "attained."—W. M. S.

Ver. 8.—*Religious recompense.* "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is." It is a fair charge against mediævalism, that it left out of sight the Christianization of this present life, and became only another-worldism. The best carried to the dying was everything; the elevation of the earthly life was nothing. Marshes might remain undrained, habitations unimproved, knowledge be imprisoned, science be garrotted, and this earth neglected, provided the people became true sons of the Church and possessed the priestly passports to eternity! The religious nature (and there is that in every man) was perverted. Man became the subject-power of those who, in the name of God, darkened the moral sense, and degraded human nature under the pretence of saving it. The gospel has always had the promise of the life that now is; it saves men from selfishness and sin, as well as from Gehenna.

I. THE LIFE THAT NOW IS WAS CREATED BY GOD. Human life and human history are not accidents. God created us, and not we ourselves. Better to be born and to die in the same hour, than to live on through weary years, if human life has not a heavenly purpose in it. God thought out this world. God designed us to use it; and when we mourn over sin and ignorance and darkness, we rejoice that Christ came to put away sin, and to bring in an everlasting righteousness. Nature is ours, with all her mountains and seas, her pastures and flocks, the silvery thread of her rivers, and the Gothic arches of her forests, richly to enjoy. Christ came to claim humanity, to redeem humanity. The broken harp he will restrain and set to divinest music. We will not put sepia into all the pictures of earth's to-morrow; for "the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: and the glory of the Lord be revealed, and all flesh see it together."

II. THE LIFE THAT NOW IS IS TO BE MOULDED BY GOSPEL INFLUENCES. We read that Paul "persuaded and turned away much people." If the gospel has the promise, we must help in the fulfilment of the promise. When we see wrongs, we must try to remedy them. When God gives us the remedy, we must take care to point to the great Physician alone. We need not be afraid. The gospel is unique; it stands alone. It has done more for this sin-stricken world than any words of man can tell. And Christ still lives on, and his Spirit is one of restraint in men, even when it is not a salvation. If caricature could have crushed Christianity, it would have been silenced long ago. The life that now is was moulded by the gospel, so that men who were once darkness had light in the Lord. Humanity breathed again; slavery felt its grasp grow weaker; polygamy became a cruelty and a shame; and as we look at its beneficent progress, and see orphanages and homes and refuges rising up on every hand, we have abundant evidence that the gospel is promise of the life that now is. Suicide, that had been the euthanasia of Rome, ceased. Men who had lost their love of life in the satiety of its pleasures, and to whom death was a relief from its *ennui*, gave place to a race who found new hope and new joy in the pursuit and pleasures of the life that now is, under the lordship of Christ.—W. M. S.

Ver. 8.—*The great beyond.* "And of that which is to come." It is not too much to say that the gospel alone, in this age, is the witness to immortality—a witness preserved in three aspects: it is taught by Christ's words; illustrated in Christ's life; and attested by Christ's resurrection. Outside the gospel we have materialism, which denies it; agnosticism, which says it does not know about it; and the modern school who use the word "immortality," but mean immortality of influence, or a life which has on earth its permanent pervasive power after we are gone: just as the oak is immortal which sends on, from acorn to acorn, its being. Before Christ came: 1. Immortality had its place as an instinct. The philosophers admitted that. 2. It had its place as an imagination. The poets made dreams out of it. 3. It had its place as an ancient revelation. The Hebrews had knowledge of it. But secularism, in the fashionable school of Sadducees, had darkened it. Christ came to bring life and immortality to light by the gospel. It is this light in which the gospel is bathed; the perspective behind

all its picture-teachings; the consolation of apostles, confessors, and martyrs. But Paul links it with the life that now is, because he would not let the doctrine of immortality become basely used, as it was in Persia. There slavery and wrong were unredressed. Persia said to the oppressed, the poor, the serf, the miserable, "Never mind, Ormuzd will make it right hereafter!" Not so says Paul. Religion has its rectitudes and its rewards here as well. The gospel has the promise of the life that now is, *and* of that which is to come.

I. **THEY LIFE IS CONTINUOUS; THERE IS NO BREAK.** Death is not a dividing power. It is a dark arch through which the river flows. If a pure river, then he which is holy shall be holy still. If a fetid river, then he which is filthy shall be filthy still. This is life eternal—to know Christ; and, having him, we have glory and immortality. The insect does not die when it changes its garment from the grub to the winged being, when it exchanges earth for air. Nor do we die. We are unclothed that we may be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. The body sheds itself often. At seventy we have had ten bodies; but the mind, the heart, the conscience, the memory, have a consciously unbroken continuity. We never shed *them*! The road is seen to-day from the child's first step; the river flows through town and city, but it is the same river. We feel this; it is the mystery of personality; it is the symbol of continuity. Through all the years we have had one being, and through the dark arch of death it flows on into the life that is to come.

II. **THEN LIFE IS A PROPHECY.** There is no difficulty here. As the child is the prophecy of the man, so the man is the prophecy of the immortal. In a mirror, and that mirror himself, man may read the future world. His tastes, desires, pursuits, pleasures, all globe themselves in the microcosm of his heart. He need consult no augurs about future destiny. Here are the mystic pages: "He that believeth on the Son hath life;" its form, shape, colour, quality. Christ has changed the nature, and made it God-like and Divine. The Christian life may be shady, imperfect, and stained with evil; but it is a God-like thing; its pity, purity, righteousness, holiness, are attested. Perfect it, and you have heaven. It were well for men to think, not only of what is, but of what is to come. Even bad men hope to alter. Men think a sudden change at last may come; a turn of the helm just as the vessel nears the rapids may cause it to glide into the river of life. But life here is a prophecy. It is the earnest of the inheritance of reward or shame—the life that is to come, with its advent hour so quiet, so sure, so solemn; coming but once, but coming to all. We thank God for the great sky of immortality above us, and for the rest that remaineth for the people of God.—W. M. S.

Ver. 10.—*Adequate reasons.* "For therefore we [both] labour." To understand a man's history, we must understand his philosophy of life—that is, his motives and his reasons. For no life has unity without this. It may have spasmodic activities and instinctive virtues, but no completeness or consistency. Here is—

I. **THE ARGUMENT OF A TRUE FAITH—"THEREFORE."** A man's thought does not always rule his life, even though conscience enforces truth as a duty. A man's conscience does not always rule his life. It is said that man is a will; and this is true, for it is ever the supreme power. Man is made up of three things—"I can," "I ought," "I will." Christ had become the Master of Paul's life; therefore he laboured, because the gospel was a fact, not a fable (ver. 7) spun out of Jewish brains. Men like Strauss have tried to prove it a myth—something that grew up in the minds of men. Imagine the Jewish mind that had grown more ritual and legal, developing into the simplicity of Christianity! Imagine philosophy that had grown more and more proud and exclusive, developing a religion for the common people! The gospel was a faithful saying, and St. Paul did not alter and improve his doctrine and teachings; he preaches the same gospel in his earlier and later Epistles. He was a man of sober judgment and of intellectual power, and no mere rhapsodist. He says, "It is worthy of all acceptance"—by the scholar and the peasant, the Jew and the Gentile, the bond and the free. The Jew would find it fulfilled his Law, his symbols, his prophecy. The Gentile would find it answered to his in-tinct, his hidden desire, his deepest intuition. "Therefore" is the argument of a true faith. We are not the disciples of a new sentiment or a mere romantic embassy; for the new temple is built, like the temple of Jerusalem, upon a rock.

II. **THE TOIL OF A TRUE FAITH.** "Therefore we labour," not simply "we teach" nor

"formulate opinions." That might be done with ease, like philosophic teachers, in the garden and the porch. "We labour!" A word involving pain and tears, as well as toil. The tendencies of the times are against us. The corrupt taste of a degenerate age is against us. The cross is to the Jew a stumbling-block, and to the Greek foolishness. We do not please men, like the rhetoricians. We do not amuse men, like the sophists. We labour in journeyings, in perils, in hunger, in stripes. Think of St. Paul's outcast condition, so far as his own countrymen were concerned. Think of his relation to the Roman power—suspected of sedition; and accusations of his fellow-countrymen, the Jews. At a time when Rome swarmed with spies, he was labouring in the face of certain danger and death.—W. M. S.

Ver. 10.—*Apostolic endurance.* "We suffer reproach." This is hard to bear, even when it is not deserved. All who have broken old ties of Church or home know its power. Men ever brand with heresy that which conflicts with their own opinions. Against St. Paul men brought false charges. We must not surround the gospel *then* with the glory associated with it *now*. We put the nimbus on the heads of the saints and martyrs; their enemies crowned them with shame.

I. THERE WAS THE CONSCIOUS LOSS OF ALL THAT THE WORLD HOLDS DEAR. A good name and a fair fame, how precious these are to us all! But if we move daily in an atmosphere of suspicion and false accusation, how full of misery the outward lot becomes! It is a proof of how precious Christ was to Paul, that he counts all things but offal that he may win Christ. Reproach itself became a source of joy when he felt that it was endured for the Master's cause. "If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are ye."

II. IT WAS A SURE PROOF OF THE REALITY OF THEIR RELIGION. "Because I testify of it that the works thereof are evil," said Christ, "therefore they have hated me." The Master was reproached as a blasphemer, a wine-bibber, a seditionist, a friend of publicans and sinners. It was a testimony to his earnest character that Paul suffered reproach. Wolves do not worry a painted sheep, and the world does not persecute a mere professor. In every age of religious earnestness reproach has had to be endured. The Covenanters of Scotland in their wilderness-worship, when they spread the white communion cloth on the yet whiter snow; the Puritans in their hidden assemblies; and missionaries like Carey, satirized by the reviews! Even now it is not an easy thing to be a Christian; but we find in the gospel that which no secular inspiration can give—the power to live in the face of an antagonistic world.—W. M. S.

Ver. 10.—*Sustaining motive.* "Because we trust in the living God." One remarkable fact in the history of St. Paul was that nothing damped his ardour. It was not so with such men as Luther, who seemed to feel at last that all is vain. There were no outward forces to sustain the life of the new Church. Well may the ancient words be used in contrasting the cause of Mohammed with that of the gospel: "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we trust in the Name of the Lord our God."

I. "IN THE LIVING GOD." The tendency of Judaism was to leave God in the past! The age of inspiration had passed, the prophetic roll had closed, and the Jews became scribes and traditionists. They had a codex of finished Law, and gathered up the opinions of the rabbis upon the minutest matters of ceremonial and duty. Paul preached a God who was then baptizing men with fire—a Holy Spirit that was working in the hearts of the faithful.

II. "THE LIVING GOD;" BECAUSE THE GOSPEL SHOWED ALL THE MARKS OF LIFE. It embodied Divine power, it manifested a living purpose. It had an echo in the conscience and heart of men. God, who in times past had spoken to the fathers by the prophets, had in these last days spoken unto them by his Son. God was manifest in the flesh. The Spirit had descended after Christ's ascension, and Pentecost had already taken its place in history.

III. "THE LIVING GOD" HAD SHOWN THAT HE COULD TAKE CARE OF HIS SERVANTS. He had opened ways for them; he had touched the hearts of men. As they preached, the message had been accompanied with power from on high; and Paul in his imprisonment had received grace according to his day.

IV. "THE LIVING GOD" WHO WOULD CONTINUE HIS WORK IF HIS SERVANTS DIED. Empires might fall; dynasties might change; the ancient Jewish Church might fulfil

its day; but the living God had designed a new heaven and a new earth, wherein righteousness should dwell; and thus his apostles trusted, not in an arm of flesh, but in a living God.—W. M. S.

Ver. 10.—*The universal Redeemer.* “Who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.” Paul had no limited atonement to preach, but that Christ died for all, and was the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. There was no court of the Gentiles; for all alike—Jew and Greek—were included under sin, that the grace of God might appear to all men. In Christ Jesus there is neither Greek nor Jew, bond nor free; all are one in the provision; all need it; all must have it. “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” But

I. HE IS THE SAVIOUR SPECIALLY OF THEM THAT BELIEVE; for unless faith looks up and lays hold on Christ, the virtue will not come out of him, either of forgiveness or life. It matters not that the lifeboat is provided for all in the sinking ship, unless men will leap into the lifeboat. It matters not that the electric cord conveys the current, unless men adjust it to their wants.

II. AND THIS SALVATION IS MADE MANIFEST IN EVERY AGE. In that age it stayed suicide, it raised hospitals, it emancipated Ephesians and Corinthians from lust, it uplifted women, it purified law, and it created brotherhood between Samaritan, Gentile, and Jew. In the early centuries we see it at work in the varied peoples that united in its worship, whilst the bishops of the Church were African, Greek, Roman, and Armenian. It saved men in the catacombs from despair, and constrained them to write on their epitaphs words that breathed of hope; and it continues to save. It enlarges the kingdom of Christ; it breaks up the heptarchy of evil in the heart, as province after province becomes loyal to God; and it redeems body, soul, and spirit. “Beside me there is no Saviour” is as true to-day as ever. The love of beauty often ends in mere sensuous aestheticism. The seeking after righteousness often leaves the upas tree of the heart with its deadly leaves within. New ideals of social economy find man’s selfishness supreme in every new adjustment of law. Selfishness never has been slain, save at the cross. But this gospel saves them that believe *to-day*. Men too often prefer costly ritual and formal ceremonial; but a new heart means a new life, and the gospel saves them that believe.—W. M. S.

Ver. 12.—*A young teacher.* “Let no man despise thy youth.” Apart from the direct reference of these words to the Christian apostolate, they are appropriate to us all in the season of youth. Spring-time is so different from autumn! Nature then is full of promise. As in spring the buds are bursting, and the birds building, and Nature’s flower-show preparing, and her orchestra tuning,—still we pause to think what may come. Locusts may eat up all green things; the hot sirocco winds may wither the verdure, and the fruit of the vine may fail. Still there is a blessed promise in early days. No sane man will be found to despise youth in itself. As well despise the acorn because it is not an oak, or the orange blossom because it has not fruited. The spirit of the text is this—Do not act so as to lead men to despise you.

I. MEN DESPISE MERE WORD-HEROISM. Be an example in word; in conversation, which means citizenship; in charity, which means every aspect of love to God and man; in spirit, which means the atmosphere that surrounds your life; in faith, which means vital obedience to the doctrines of the gospel; and in purity, the absence of which was the curse of Asia Minor and the cities of the East. Nothing gives greater power than conduct. “Character,” says Ossili, “is higher than intellect.”

II. MEN DESPISE THE TRIFLER AND THE IDLER. If the word and the conversation be frivolous; as death and life are in the power of the tongue; then the man who is the rattle-brain of society is not likely to be the ornament of the Church or the admiration of the world. Men will, and ought, to despise such. There may be a dignified youth as well as a dignified age. It is not necessary to have a formal and unnatural decorum, but it is necessary for those who speak on the high matters of religion to show that they live in that world of solemn realities of which they speak.—W. M. S.

Ver. 14.—*Spiritual negligence.* “Neglect not the gift that is in thee.” This is a counsel specially for Timothy as a teacher; but it applies to us all.

I. THE GIFT IS A RESPONSIBILITY. We are not merely *receptive* beings. A lake, unless the living waters flow through it, is stagnant and dangerous. The world of youth and beauty is a world of life. The sun parts with its beams. The ocean exhales its moisture. The tree yields its fruit. The air passes through the lungs. The river makes music of progress as it passes to the sea. Here in nature there is no arresting hand, no force of self-restraint, no self-hood. God has "set in order" the courses of the rivers, and made a path for the light; and they obey his will. Man can say "No" to God's moral ordinations—not, of course, without harm and penalty; but he *can*, and too often he does (1) *pervert* the gift, and turn it to disloyal uses; and at other times (2) *he neglects it*—he lays up the talent in a napkin. He turns selfish, and mars the use of his gift by misuse and by personal ease and indulgence. The world is no better for his birth. The Church finds him a selfish epicure at the banquet of God's grace.

II. THE GIFT VARIES. It is, however, somewhere within us. There *are* forces of life hidden in the soul, gracious gifts of help and healing; but man neglects them. Sometimes he undervalues them with a perilous modesty, which forgets that the weakest vessel can hold *some* water; the simplest speech be eloquent for its Lord; the slender time be rich with opportunities. God has not made a mistake in our creation. There *are* gifts of service, gifts of sympathy, gifts of prayer, which, if envy were angelic, angels might envy. Neglect not thy gift. It will be required of thee again. It needs not age to ripen it and make it ready. "Let no man despise thy youth; be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." "Be great in act as you have been in thought," says Shakespeare. This is our danger—neglect. We know what it means in education, which has its *now*; in the dwelling, which, however well furnished, soon becomes unhealthy and unlovely through disuse and dust; in exercise, which, neglected, imperils muscle and blood and nerve. So in religion we are to be active and earnest, not resting on the couch of personal comfort, or merely enjoying, from the observatory of revelation, the vision of the heavenly shores.—W. M. S.

Ver. 15.—Mental absorption. "Meditate upon these things." They need and will bear meditation. Divine truths are too awful and august in their deep significance to be exhausted by superficial notice. They need to be focused to the eye, and studied in all their central depth and beauty.

I. FOR MEDITATION IS THE VERY ATMOSPHERE OF RELIGION. It requires the silent study that we may enjoy "the harvest of a quiet eye," and see deeply into the "wondrous things" of the Divine Law. Meditate; for thus only will you understand your *real* self, and so know better the adaptation of the gospel to your need and your sin.

II. FOR IN MEDITATION WE ARE STUDYING GOD'S THOUGHTS; these require on our part time and insight. This is the fault of our age—it does not meditate. It is superficially critical; apt to fly off at some tangent of mental difficulty; and is so impatient with the key that it injures the lock. We cannot *think* well in a hurry, any more than we can *work* well in a hurry. Many of the worst *human* mistakes of life we should avoid if we meditated more.

"Evil is wrought by want of thought,
As well as want of heart."

Our prayers would be wider in scope and richer in feeling if we meditated more; and our judgment would not be so hard about the dealings of God with us if we meditated on "the way the fathers trod," and the Divine revelation of our need of discipline. Meditate, and then the cross will stand out in its august significance; the heart will feel that it needs a Saviour as well as a Teacher; and instead of feeling that you know all about that wondrous mystery of Divine provision, you will pray that you, like Paul, may "know the love of Christ," which passeth knowledge. "Meditate on these things." They are pluralized; for they *are* many. The gospel facts and the gospel doctrines constitute a wide range of subjects affecting alike our temporal and eternal interest.—W. M. S.

Ver. 15.—Observation of others. "That thy profiting may appear to all." The Christian teachings are not like Eleusinian Mysteries; they are revelations to be *lived*

out in the broad daylight of history. A religion that ends in meditation makes the *mystic* a religion that confines itself to *solitudes*—makes the *ascetic*, who shuts himself out from the world.

I. THE PROFITING IS NOT TO BE A MATTER OF MERE FEELING; or, in other words, is no mere *emotionalism* that may coexist with lax character and feeble morality. Too often this has been the case, and the Church has been apt to palliate the sins of the fraudulent trader or the bankrupt trustee, if, though he has wronged others and brought whole families to beggary and ruin, he has still preserved his spiritual emotions, his seraphic rhapsodies of expression, and his fervent interest in missionary agencies.

II. THE PROFITING MUST APPEAR IN THE CHARACTER. It must come to the touchstone of action and character. It must energize the conscience, quicken the passive virtues of humility and submission, and brace the will for the stern obedience of the soldier and the faithful obligations of the steward.—W. M. S.

Ver. 16.—*A dual heed.* “Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine.” These two God hath joined together, and let no man put them asunder. Let not self-hood become a self-righteousness, which ignores the doctrine that we need Christ as our Strength and our Saviour, and the Holy Spirit as our Sanctifier. *Taking heed to ourselves must not make us daringly self-confident.* Some superficial men think that they can go this warfare on their own charges. The whole armour of God is needful, and not the mere equipment of personal judgment and unaided strength. But taking heed to the doctrine, let us remember that it is *not* a dead dogma, but that the Christian verities are spirit and life. We must not be hearers for others or critics of others, judging one another, and measuring our own virtue by the shock produced in us at the inconsistencies and failings of others.

I. TAKING HEED TO OURSELVES AS HAVING STILL THE WEAK FLESH TO DEAL WITH. Knowing what war there still is in our members. Knowing that this same gospel says, “The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Remembering that the richest lives have made shipwreck, and the loftiest monuments been the first to be shattered by the storm. We must remember that the teacher elevated by honour may be the first to fall.

II. TAKING HEED TO OURSELVES, BECAUSE NONE CAN DO THIS FOR US. We know more of ourselves than any other can know. Our tastes, our tendencies, our secret desires, our constitutional weaknesses. We see how the “needle” trembles in the presence of certain loadstones of evil, and we must therefore look within, and be watchful. “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”—W. M. S.

Ver. 16.—*The life-endurance.* “Continue in them.” There must be perseverance or pressing forward. And *this* is the great point. “Ye did run well” applies to many who were first in the Atalanta race. “That your fruit may remain,” said Christ. Permanence. This is beautiful. How many actual blossoms never come to fruit at all! and how much fruit becomes the subject of blight and withering! Young life, like Timothy’s, is lovely in its enthusiasm; but—

I. WHAT A WORLD IS BEFORE HIM! How little *he* knows yet of the perils of the way! Churches may become corrupt like Ephesus, or divided like Corinth. Demas may desert; Hymeneus and Philetus may make shipwreck. Opposition may increase. Enemies may multiply. The work may grow harder; and the atmosphere in which it is done grow colder. Continue in them—

II. BECAUSE THIS IS THE TEST OF ALL TRUE HEROISM. The vessel with her freshly painted hull, her gay bunting, her trim sails, her beautiful lines, may float swan-like in the harbour, and then skim the waters like a thing of life. But she is nobler when, with battered sides, and gaping bulwarks, and rent sails, and dismantled rigging, she reaches her destined haven. “Continue in them.” The sword may not be so bright with the silvery sheen of newness; the helmet may not be so undinted; the apparel may not be so unstained; but the hero has won the war, fought the good fight, and finished his course.—W. M. S.

Ver. 16.—*Saving others.* “For in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.” Not, of course, as providing the salvation or applying it; the first is

done by the Saviour, the second by the Holy Spirit; but in working out the salvation—in making use of all Divine means and instrumentalities.

I. PERSONAL SALVATION. "Save thyself;" for in the heaven-voyage the captain is not to be lost while the company and the crew are saved. In this war the enemy is not to pick off the sentinels and the captains alone. No; Divine grace is sufficient for pastor as well as for people; but it would be a terrible thing—alas! not an unknown thing—that the minister who has taught others, himself should be a castaway. Next follows—

II. THE SALVATION OF OTHERS. "Them that hear thee." A simple word, "hear." The pulpit must not be the place for the airing of personal crotchets, or the use of arrows and shafts of mere wit, or the discussion of mere critical themes. "The things that ye have heard" are such as the apostle defines—august and real, vital and eternal realities. To hear may seem a light thing, and so it is if the message be light. But the true minister does not tremble before his audience, any more than Paul did before Felix. If the congregation be his *patron*, he may please them to secure his living; if they are his *Sanhedrim*, he may be heard before them in test of his judgments; if they are his *guests*, and not the Master's, he may cater for a banquet suited to their tastes; but if he is the minister of God to them for good, if woe is his if he preach not the gospel, if he has the sacred responsibility of one who is put in *trust* with the gospel,—then hearing is a solemn thing. On *that* may hang character, influence, destiny. He is not there as lord over God's heritage. He is not there to have dominion over their faith. He appeals to reason, to conscience, and all that we mean by heart and soul. But he does not create a gospel or propound some new philosophy—he is to preach (ch. ii. 5, 6) "one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus," and yet Christ Jesus the Lord; the God who was "manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (ch. iii. 16). "And them that hear thee." Ours is a solemn relationship; but it may be a sweet and sublime one too. In the far-away land we may greet each other as victors in the same war, winners of the same race, companions on the same pilgrimage. Saved with the ancient swords stored in the heavenly armoury. Saved, with the great sea behind us and Canaan in possession, with sweeter grapes than those of Eshcol, and more triumphant strains of victory than those of Miriam. I say it may be so with us, and with some who have *heard* and whispered the sacred words to themselves as on the last pillow they went home to God. The very sentence, "them that hear thee," has in it all the pathos of the past, as well as all the realism of the present. The lips that speak are only those of man, but the message is the Word of him who "would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth." Is it true of us, as we face each other, that we shall see one another again—yea, years to come—and that these words may rise up against preacher, and hearers, or both? Is it true that waiting angels will bear back the message, "This and that man [woman, child] was born there"? The living Church of God is holy ground. Then truly we need no meretricious aids to make our ministry pleasant, or to make the Church harmonize with the age. Eternity will reverse many of the verdicts of time. Much of our judgment now is touched and tarnished with the worldly ideal. The hour is coming when he who said, "Go, . . . and speak in the temple . . . all the words of this life" will call us all alike into his presence; and then it will be seen and known before God and the holy angels whether we have both saved ourselves and them that heard us.—W. M. S.

Vers. 1—5.—*Timothy warned.* I. APOSTASY. "But the Spirit saith expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith." This was to be properly an apostasy, or movement away from Christ from within the Church. Some who were professed believers were to fall away from the faith. They were unworthily to use their Christian position, Christian enlightenment and reputation, against Christ. This was to take place in "later times," not in the times before the completion of the kingdom of God, but simply in times subsequent to the time that then was, not all in one time but, as pointing to more than one anti-Christian development, in *times*. This was explicitly foretold, the prophecy being traced, not to the consciousness of the apostle, but to the influx of the Spirit. The prophecy had already been made known, but we may understand that it was still already witnessed in the consciousness of the apostle. If the

mystery of godliness was operating, there was also, as announced in 2. Thessalonians, already operating the mystery of iniquity.

II. HOW THE APOSTASY WAS TO BE BROUGHT ABOUT. 1. *Source*. "Giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." The apostle points to the apostasy as having its origin from beneath. There is the agency of those who are the tools of the devil. These are seducing spirits, their object being to lead away from Christ. And they are demons, hostile to souls, who give rise to soul-destroying doctrines. This is the quarter from which the apostates are to draw their inspiration and their faith. It has been remarked here how we cannot stand isolated. If we are not influenced by the Holy Spirit, we must fall under the power of one or other—for they are a plurality, and do not agree unless in their end—of the deceiving spirits. If we do not give heed to the doctrine of God our Saviour—one and thoroughly consistent as well as sublime—we must give heed to one or other of the doctrines of devils, many and inconsistent. 2. *Instrumentality*. "Through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron." The evil spirits are to be thought of as working in and through these heretical teachers. They are hidden from our view and from the consciousness of the teachers themselves; but there seems no reason to doubt that those who pay no heed to the leadings of the Spirit of truth lay themselves open to be possessed, in an ordinary way, by one or other of the spirits of falsehood whose instruments they become. The heretical teachers are suitably described as speakers of lies. They were to give forth as truth what were lies—what did not agree with the nature of things, what did not agree with the nature of God, with the facts of human nature, that for which they were without evidence, and of which they had no clear conviction. They were to be like men wearing a mask, laying claim to superior sanctity and to show the way to sanctity, but only to conceal their own turpitude. For they were to be branded in their own conscience, branded as criminals were branded, and branded where the marks of their crimes could not be concealed from themselves.

III. TWO POINTS IN THE HERETICAL TEACHING THAT WAS TO BE THE PRECURSOR OF THE APOSTASY. "Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats." This asceticism was already appearing in Essenism. The honourable, and even exaggerated, estimate of marriage which was characteristic of the Jew, and of the Pharisee as the typical Jew, found no favour with the Essene. Marriage was to him an abomination. Those Essenes, who lived together as members of an order, and in whom the principles of the sect were carried to their logical consequences, eschewed it altogether. To secure the continuance of their brotherhood, they adopted children, whom they brought up in the doctrines and practices of the community. There were others, however, who took a different view. They accepted marriage as necessary for the preservation of the race. Yet even with them it seems to have been regarded only as an inevitable evil. They fenced it off by stringent rules, demanding a three years' probation, and enjoining various purificatory rites. The conception of marriage as quickening and educating the affections, and thus exalting and refining human life, was wholly foreign to their minds. Woman was a mere instrument of temptation in their eyes. Deceitful, faithless, selfish, jealous, misled and misleading by her passions. But their ascetic tendencies did not stop here. The Pharisee was very careful to observe the distinction of meats lawful and unlawful, as laid down by the Mosaic code, and even rendered those ordinances vexatious by minute definitions of his own. But the Essene went far beyond him. He drank no wine, he did not touch animal food. His meal consisted of a piece of bread and a single mess of vegetables. Even this simple fare was prepared for him by special officers consecrated for the purpose, that it might be free from all contamination. Nay, so stringent were the rules of the order on this point, that, when an Essene was excommunicated, he often died of starvation, being bound by oath not to take food prepared by defiled hands, and thus being reduced to eat the very grass of the field (Lightfoot). In Gnosticism, which came to its full development after the apostle's day, these points had great prominence, being grounded in the idea of matter as being the principle of evil. The same points come out very remarkably in Roman Catholicism. The ordinance of marriage, which our Lord honoured, is thus depreciated in a decree of the Council of Trent: "Whosoever shall say that the married state is to be preferred to a state of virginity or celibacy, and that it is not better and

more blessed to remain in virginity or celibacy than to be joined in marriage, let him be accursed." In the same line superior sanctity, or special merit, is connected with abstinence from meats. Thus the prophecy received striking fulfilment.

IV. REPUTATION OF THE SECOND POINT IN THE HERETICAL TEACHING. 1. *Position to which it is opposed.* "Which God created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth." God has created meats, and he has created them for the use of all. At the same time, it is true that the purpose of creation is only fulfilled in the case of them that believe and know the truth. They alone can appreciate the condition attached to the use of meats, viz. receiving with thanksgiving. "A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this." But those that have experience of the truth as believers are sensible of their mercies, and give God thanks for them. 2. *Substantiation.* (1) *Broad principle.* "For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, if it be received with thanksgiving." This is one broad principle on which practice is to be based. "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." We must lay hold—against a false asceticism—of the essential goodness of whatever God has made for food. It may have to be refused on the ground of health, on the ground of moral discipline as expressed in 1 Cor. ix. 27, on the ground of benefit to others as expressed in 1 Cor. viii. 13. But apart from such considerations, to which only their due weight must be attached, a creature-comfort as good in itself has no unholiness to us, if the condition is fulfilled, viz. receiving with thanksgiving. It is a very important consideration, which we must not lose sight of in feeling the claims of abstinence, that by our creature-comforts God is seeking to make us glad, and to attach us to himself in thankfulness. (2) *Elucidation of the good creature of God having no unholiness to us.* "For it is sanctified through the Word of God and prayer." By conversing with God through his Word we rise above our own low ideas and aims, and get into the region of his thoughts and purposes. We get at the principles which are to regulate us, and the feelings which are to animate us, in our daily life. We thereby connect God with our daily life, and are prepared for sitting down to the meals of the day. But we are to connect God more immediately with our meals by prayer. We are to ask God, from whom our table mercies come, to bless us in the use of them, and to accept our thankfulness for them. Here is a very old form of grace before meat: "Blessed be thou, O Lord, who hast fed me from my youth, who givest food to all flesh. Fill our hearts with joy and gladness, that, having always what sufficeth, we may abound unto all good works, in Christ Jesus our Lord, through whom be unto thee honour, glory, and power, for ever and ever." By such reasonable acknowledgment of God before our food is it sanctified to us. We can partake of it as a holy thing, as that which we have as a covenant privilege. Nothing is said about the first point in the heretical teaching. But it can be refuted on much the same ground. God has instituted marriage for our happiness. The end of the institution is carried out in the case of them that believe and know the truth, by their thanking God for the happiness which is thus ministered to them. The married life is made holy by being connected with the Word of God and prayer.—R. F.

Vers. 6—10.—*Guidance of Timothy.* I. AS TO THE TRUE FAITH. 1. *Positively.* "If thou put the brethren in mind of those things, thou shalt be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished in the words of the faith, and of the good doctrine which thou hast followed until now." The apostle has been referring more immediately to the principles of asceticism which were to have their development in subsequent times. That Timothy should put the brethren (not excluding holders of office like himself) in mind of these things, was the condition of his being a good minister of Christ Jesus. Whereupon Paul takes occasion to give his idea of "the good minister," under a particular aspect. He is one who makes the Divine words his continual nourishment. As there are foods which are nutritive for the body, so what is nutritive for the soul is what God says to us, especially about himself and his feelings toward us. These Divine words are words of faith, or words which require faith for their apprehension. They are also words of good doctrine, or words in which instruction is given. It is well that there are infallible words for faith, and that we are not left to the unreliable guidance of reason. It is upon these that teaching must be founded, if it can be called good. The good minister is one who has his own soul nourished in words which he cordially believes, and in

which he is well instructed. Paul had been the instructor of Timothy, and he testifies that his instructions had hitherto been followed by him. 2. *Negatively*. "But refuse profane and old wives' fables." The apostle, we may understand, refers to such doctrines of the current philosophy (mystic in its character) as, mingling with Christianity, would form what was known as Gnosticism. These doctrines, such as that of emanations (endless genealogies), were myths, or what had no foundation in reality. They were profane, or fitted to shock religious feeling. They were also anile, or only fit for mindless and credulous old women. Timothy was to resist all tendency to incorporate Eastern mysticism with Christianity. And, when we consider the danger that arose to the Church from this quarter, we must recognize the wisdom of the apostolic advice.

II. AS TO THE HIGHER GYMNASIUM. "And exercise thyself unto godliness." There was a straining in connection with ascetical exercises. Timothy was also to strain himself, but in such exercises as prayer and meditation, which lead to godliness, or the cherishing of right feelings toward God and the practice that is pleasing to him. 1. *Bodily gymnastic*. "For bodily exercise is profitable for a little." The apostle apparently has in his eye such bodily exercise as was associated with asceticism; but it is as separated from asceticism, not as part of asceticism, that he says it is profitable to a small extent. Of asceticism in this century the most notable example is Lacordaire. "Once in the convent at Chalais, after having delivered an affecting sermon on humility, he felt irresistibly impelled to follow up precept by example. He came down from the pulpit, begged the assembled brethren to treat him with the severity he deserved, and, uncovering his shoulders, received from each of them twenty-five strokes." "The chapter-room of the convent at Flavigny was supported by a wooden pillar; he made of it a column of flagellation, to which, after confession, he would cause himself to be bound." "In the ancient church of the Carmelites at Paris, there is a certain crypt or subterranean chapel, in which, one Good Friday, he raised a cross, and, bound to it with cords, remained upon it three hours." The apostle views asceticism in respect of bodily exercise. For, although it may not always exalt it into a religion, yet it lays great stress on it as a means of suppressing the corruption of the heart, of entering into sympathy with the crucified Saviour, and of making atonement for the sins of men. The apostle lays hold upon this, and says that it is profitable to a small extent. It is profitable for the health of the body, for the improvement of its powers, for the obtaining of a living. It may even be allowed to have a bearing, not by itself, but in connection with right principle, on holy living (1 Cor. ix. 27). 2. *The gymnastic that is universally profitable*. "But godliness is profitable for all things." The apostle regards it as recommended by its profitableness. "It is that which will exceedingly turn to account, and bring in gains unto us exceedingly vast; in comparison whereto all other designs, which men with so much care and toil do pursue, are very unprofitable or detrimental, yielding but shadows of profit or bringing real damage to us. Godliness enables a man to judge of things in their true nature and proportions, and to fulfil his duties in all his relations. It enables him to act uniformly, so that he understands what he is doing, and can make himself understood. It enables a man to act in his own best interest." "If we mark what preserveth the body sound and lusty, what keepeth the mind vigorous and brisk, what saveth and improveth the estate, what upholdeth the good name, what guardeth and graceth a man's whole life,—it is nothing else but proceeding in our demeanour and dealings according to the honest and wise rules of piety." It is a man for all conditions, makes him humble, grateful, and faithful in prosperity, makes a man trustful, and full of comfort in adversity. It furnishes us with fit employment, "alone fasteneth our thoughts, affections, and endeavours upon occupations worthy the dignity of our nature, suiting the excellency of our natural capacities and endowments, tending to the perfection and advancement of our reason, to the enriching and ennobling of our souls." It furnishes us with the best friendships. It is said even, "Thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field, and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee." It unites us to good men in holy communion. It makes our friends doubly precious to us. (1) *Its profitableness for this life*. "Having promise of the life which now is." Godliness has a tendency to promote a man's earthly good, in making him industrious, temperate, prudent. On the other hand, there are respects in which it may be said to hinder his earthly good. It keeps him back from that greed which would lead him to devote his whole time to worldly business, which would forbid him

to work for others. It debars him from seeking gain by unworthy means. It may call upon him to make liberal contributions from his income for benevolent objects. It may bring him into a position in which his health is injured. It may call upon him to give up all his goods, and even life itself. Yet it is true that it has the promise of this life. "Although God hath not promised to load the godly man with affluence of worldly things; not to put him into a splendid and pompous garb; not to dispense to him that which may serve for pampering the flesh or gratifying wanton fancy; not to exempt him from all the inconveniences to which human nature and the worldly state are subject; yet hath he promised to furnish him with whatever is needful or convenient for him, in due measure and season, the which he doth best understand. His care will not be wanting to feed us and clothe us comfortably, to protect us from evil, to prosper our good undertakings." He has promised that, if we seek first the kingdom of God, all things that pertain to this life shall be added thereto. With Christ, he has promised to give us all things. He has promised that all things will work together for good to those that love God. It is the godly who stand in a right relation to this life. They put the right value upon it. They regard all that they receive as a gift from God, as what they are unworthy of, as what may be taken away from them, as what they ought to be grateful for, as what they are faithfully to use for God. (2) *Its profitableness for the life to come.* "And of that which is to come." If the godly man has the true enjoyment even of this life, to him especially belongs the life to come with its incomparably greater blessings. He has the inheritance uncorruptible, undefiled, never-fading. He has an exceeding, even an eternal, weight of glory. He has the beatific vision of God, the satisfaction of awaking with God's likeness. *Formula of confirmation.* "Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptance." This calls attention to what has gone before as deserving of our best consideration.

III. UPBEARING HOPE. "For to this end we labour and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of them that believe." With a view especially to the promised life to come, the apostle placed himself at worldly disadvantage. Instead of consulting his ease, he toiled. Instead of consulting his popularity, he suffered reproach, as the true reading is. Under this he was borne up by hope, which was set, not on a dead idol which could do nothing, but on the living God who could do all things for him. He who was able to fulfil his promise was also disposed. He is designated "the Saviour of all men." There is a universality in his benevolence. He willeth that all should be saved. And what he has performed in Christ has been for all men. He has provided satisfaction for the sin of all men. He has entered into a covenant on behalf of all men. He has procured competent aids for all men. He has thus made all men *salvabiles*, capable of salvation, and *salvandos*, that should be saved, though all men are not in effect saved. "As he that freely offers a rich boon is no less to be accounted a benefactor and liberal, although his gift be refused, than if it were accepted; as he that opens a prison is to be styled a deliverer, although the captive will not go forth; as he that ministers an effectual remedy, although the patient will not use it, deserves the honour and thanks due to a physician; so is God, in respect of what he has performed for men and offered to them, to be worthily deemed and thankfully acknowledged Saviour, although not all men, yea, although not one man, should receive the designed benefit." While this is true, he is the Saviour specially of them that believe. He is our Saviour before we believe, but it is when we believe that we realize in our personal experience all that he is and has done for us. It is by hoping in him as our Saviour, peculiarly, that we are borne up under toils and reproaches.—R. F.

Vers. 11—16.—*Directions to Timothy.* I. DIRECTION FOUNDED ON PRECEDING CONTEXT. "These things command and teach." What was enjoined on him he was to hold up before the community over which he presided at Ephesus. He was to command, or hold up before them, an authoritative standard of conduct. This was to be characteristically *godliness*; not a working on the mere human ground, but a bringing God into connection with the life, cherishing proper feelings towards him, and observing his rules. He was also to teach, or hold up before them, revealed views of truth. While laying down faith as the condition of salvation, he was not to forget to set forth God as the Saviour of all men.

II. DIRECTION WITH REFERENCE TO HIS YOUTH. "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an ensample to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity." Timothy was a youth, still living with his parents, when Paul first took him as his companion. After the lapse of perhaps fifteen years, he is still regarded as a young man. We may understand that he was still young for the work entrusted to him; he was young to instruct, and, it might be, to exhort (ch. v. 1) elders (many of them old men). A young minister is placed in the same position; he has to speak to men whose experience goes far beyond his. He has in this respect a difficult position to fill, and it becomes him to consider well the course he takes, and, if need be, to take counsel of more experienced men in the ministry, so that he shall have thus the gravity of years, and shall give none occasion to despise him on account of his youth. The idea of a minister is that he is to be an ensample to them that believe, especially to them over whom he is placed. There are five things in which he is to lead the way. The first two go together. There is the external life of *word*. A minister is to have the right tone in his private utterances (what seem principally to be referred to as public utterances are introduced in the next verse); he is to be able to direct the minds of others away from trifles to important matters. There is also the external life of *deed*. His actions are to go along with his words; he is to give direction by the very way in which he acts. *Word and deed* reveal the inner life, the *motive forces* of which are next expressed. There is the motive force of *love*. He is impelled by love for an unseen Saviour, and for souls purchased by him. There is also the motive force of *faith*. He is impelled by what faith reveals, viz. a Master to whom he is responsible, whose honour he is to be careful of, whose reward for faithfulness he is earnestly to covet. Thus moved in his inner being, then, as the fifth and last thing, his life is characterized by *purity*. He does not receive the contamination of the world, but a pervading holy influence from a source above the world. The young minister who seeks to go before his people in these five things is taking the right plan of placing himself above being despised for his youth.

III. DIRECTION AS TO HIS USE OF THE SCRIPTURES. "Till I come, give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching." Timothy was not so much a resident minister as Paul's assistant, which involved his moving from place to place. The special arrangement by which he presided over the central Church of Ephesus was to continue in force until Paul's arrival, which was expected at no distant date. Meantime he was to give his attention to his public duties. There was first of all the *reading of the Scriptures*. This was carried down from the Jewish synagogue, in which the Old Testament Scriptures were regularly read. And the Christian Church, in the lifetime of the apostles, being under infallible guidance, we can understand that parts of the New Testament would gradually be introduced into the Christian sanctuary. This public reading of the Scriptures served a purpose then beyond what it does now. There were very few copies of the sacred Books to be obtained then. Members of Churches were, therefore, to a great extent, dependent for their Bible knowledge on what was publicly read. Meetings would require to be frequent, and a large place in these meetings would require to be given to mere reading, in order that the people might become familiar with the exact language of Scripture. With reading was associated *exhortation and teaching*. We are to understand this as being on the basis of what was read. "Scripture is the fountain of all wisdom, from which pastors ought to draw whatever they bring before their flock" (Calvin). There was exhortation to *duty*, or an appeal to the feelings, conscience, to influence men to be decided for Christ, and to keep closely by the Law of Christ. And there was teaching of *truth*, or the opening up of Scripture in its facts and principles, to show especially what Christ was and had effected for them. It was possible to combine the *hortatory and instructive*, though at one time attention would be directed more to *appeals*, at another time more to *explanations*.

IV. DIRECTION AS TO THE USE OF HIS GIFT. "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying-on of the hands of the presbytery." There is reference to his ordination, which probably took place years before he was assigned his present work in Ephesus. At that interesting time the ministerial gift, or the power of governing and the power of handling the Word, was imparted to him. Not that he was altogether without qualification before; for there were prophecies going before on him, apparently founded on the proof that he was making of himself. But

then, in all its authoritativeness, and in the fullness of the qualification in a special influence of the Spirit, the gift was imparted to him. There were two coexistent circumstances which entered into the ordination. The first was *extraordinary* in its nature, viz. prophecy, or any inspired utterance. Apparently it amounted to an intimation to the assembled congregation that Timothy was really called, and there and then fully endowed. The second concomitant, or circumstance entering into the ordination, was the laying-on of the hands of the presbytery. This was ordinary, and therefore continues to be connected with ordination, prophecy being represented by the ordination prayer and address. The presbytery then apparently consisted of the elders of the particular congregation in connection with which the ordination took place. As we learn from the Second Epistle, Paul was associated with them. It is to be noted that ruling elders took part in ordaining a teaching elder. The imposition of hands is symbolic of the impartation of a gift. Christ employs those who have been themselves gifted by him to be the medium of imparting his gift to others. The ministerial gift Timothy was not to neglect or to allow to be unused. We have read of fishes inhabiting the water of a dark cave that, never needing to use their eyes, eventually, after successive generations of them, a modification has been produced in their organism. And there not being the need, nature has ceased to make provision for it, the strange spectacle being presented of an eyeless race. So, for want of use, pleading for Christ would become a lost gift to him.

V. DIRECTION AS TO HIS APPLYING HIMSELF. "Be diligent in these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy progress may be manifest unto all." Paul had not the idea that a communication of the Holy Spirit superseded application. After saying that the gift in Timothy was not to lie unused, he now says that he was to be diligent in these things, viz. in the duties of his calling, as set down in the thirteenth verse. And, in the way of strengthening this, he adds that he was to give himself wholly to them. A minister has to make himself thoroughly acquainted with the meaning of Scripture, in order that he may open it to others. He has to know how to apply Scripture truth to the wants of his people, that he may incite them to right action. This he cannot well do along with the demands of a secular business. He needs to have his whole time to devote to it, and he needs, in the time that he has, to put out to purpose his whole strength. Close application will soon tell. His profiting will appear in a more skilful handling of the Word, in a more earnest pleading with souls.

VI. RECAPITULATION WITH ENFORCEMENT. "Take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching. Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee." He first recapitulates what was said in ver. 12. "Take heed to thyself." A minister is to take heed to himself, that he is really a subject of saving grace, that he is making satisfactory increase in grace, that his conduct does not run counter to his teaching. He next recapitulates what is said in ver. 13. "And to thy teaching." A minister is to see that he makes every endeavour to bring out the meaning of the Word of God, and to bring it to bear upon the wants of his hearers. Having thus recapitulated, he makes it stronger by adding, "Continue in these things," viz. in his private and public exercises. And a minister is encouraged to do this by the consideration that, in doing this, he shall save the souls of them that hear him. He shall reach his end; and what a felicity to be the means, under God, of saving souls! He can only expect to do this by exacting from himself a high standard of living and of preaching. And, through this, he shall reach the end of his own salvation. He has to win or lose, as well as his hearers. "And many shall say at that day, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy Name?" who shall be answered with, "I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." He has the same evil heart to contend with. "Sin dwelleth in us when we have preached never so much against it; one degree prepareth the heart for another, and one sin inclineth the mind to more." He may expect to be more severely tempted than others, as the honour of Christ lies more on him than on others.—R. F.

EXPOSITION.

CHAPTER V.

Ver. 1.—*Exhort* for *intreat*, A.V.; and omitted. Rebuke not (μὴ ἐπιπλήξῃς); only here in the New Testament for the more usual ἐπιτιμάω (2 Tim. iv. 2, and frequently in the Gospels) or ἐλέγχω, as Titus i. 13; ii. 15; Rev. iii. 19, and elsewhere. In classical Greek it expresses a sharp castigation with words. Compare the “*patrue verbera lingue*” (Hor., ‘Od.’ iii. xii. 3). It answers to the Latin *objurgo*. An *elder* (πρεσβύτερος). The context shows that the meaning is not a “presbyter,” but “an old man.” The precept has relation to Timothy’s youth (ch. iv. 12). See the same order in respect to the persons to be admonished (Titus ii. 1—6, where, however, we have the forms πρεσβύτερος and πρεσβύτερας with νέας and νεωτέρους). The direction is an instance of that admirable propriety of conduct, based upon a true charity, which vital Christianity produces. A true Christian never forgets what is due to others, never “behaves himself unseemly.” *Exhort* (παράκλησις); certainly a much better rendering than *intreat* in the A.V. The younger men. This and the other accusatives in this and the following verse are governed by παράκλησις; the prohibitive μὴ ἐπιπλήξῃς is confined to the πρεσβύτεροι. As brethren. This phrase shows that Timothy was still a young man himself. Observe, too, how even in reproving the sense of love is to be maintained. The members of the Church over which he rules are either fathers and mothers, or brothers and sisters, or, it may be added, as his own children, to the faithful pastor.

Ver. 2.—*In* for *with*, A.V. Purity (ἀγνεία); see ch. iv. 12, note. See how jealously the apostle guards against any possibility of abuse of the familiar intercourse of a clergyman with the women of his flock. They are his sisters, and ἀγνεία is to be the constant condition of his heart and character.

Ver. 3.—*Honour* (τίμα). The use of the verb τιμάω in the comment on the fourth commandment in Matt. xv. 4—6, where the withholding of the honour due consists in saying, “It is corban, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me,” and so withholding the honour due, shows clearly that in the notion of *honouring* is included that material support which their condition as widows required. So again in ver. 17 of this chapter, the “double honour” due to elders who labour in the Word and doctrine is clearly shown by ver. 18 to include payment for their maintenance. This is also borne out by the frequent use of τιμή in the sense

of “price” (Matt. xxvii. 6, 9; Acts iv. 34; vii. 16; xix. 19; 1 Cor. vi. 20, etc.). The passage might, therefore, be paraphrased, “Pay due regard to the wants of those widows who are widows indeed.” The “honour” here prescribed would be exactly the opposite to the “neglect” (παρεθεροῦντο) complained of by the Grecian Jews (Acts vi. 1). The same idea is in the Latin *honorarium*, for a fee. Widows indeed; i.e. really, as in vers. 5 and 16, desolate and alone. We learn from this passage that the care of widows by the whole Church, which began at Jerusalem in the very infancy of the Church, was continued in the Churches planted by St. Paul. We find the same institution though somewhat different in character, in subsequent ages of the Church. Widowhood, as well as virginity, became a religious profession, and widows were admitted with certain ceremonies, including the placing on their heads a veil consecrated by the bishop. Deaconesses were very frequently chosen from the ranks of the widows (Bingham, ‘Antiq.’ bk. vii. ch. iv.).

Ver. 4.—*Hath* for *have*, A.V.; *grandchildren* for *nephews*, A.V.; *towards their own family* for *at home*, A.V.; *this* for *that*, A.V.; *acceptable* in the sight of for *good and acceptable before*, A.V. and T.R. *Grandchildren* (ἐγγόνα; only here in the New Testament, but common in the LXX. and in classical Greek); descendants, children or grandchildren (as on the other hand, παγγόνα in this verse includes grandparents as well as parents). In Latin *nepotes*, “descendants;” *nos neveux* (in French), “our descendants;” and so the English word “nephews” (derived from *nepos*, through the French *neveu*) properly means, and is commonly so used in all old English writers, as e.g. in Holinshed (Richards’s Dictionary), “their nephews, or sons’ sons, which reigned in the third place.” Locke’s phrase, “a nephew by a brother,” seems to show the transition to the modern use of “nephew.” But as the old meaning of “nephews” is now obsolete, it is better to substitute “grandchildren,” as in the R.V. Let them learn. Clearly “the children or grandchildren” is the subject. To show piety towards (ἐνσεβεῖν). In the only other passage in the New Testament where this word occurs, Acts xvii. 23, it has also an accusative of the person—“whom ye worship.” In classical Greek also ἐνσεβεῖν τινα is used as well as εἰς, or ἐπὶ, or πρὸς, τινα. Their own family, of which the widowed mother or grandmother formed a part. The force of τοῦ ἑωυτοῦ οἴκου, “their own family,” lies in the implied contrast with the Church. As long

as a widow has members of her own house who are able to support her, the Church ought not to be burdened (see ver. 16). To requite (*ἀμοιβὰς ἀποδιδόναι*); literally, to give back the return or exchange due. *Ἀμοιβή* is only found here in the New Testament, but is not uncommon in the LXX., and is much used in the best classical authors. The *πρόγονοι* had nourished and cared for them in their childhood; they must requite that care by honouring and supporting them in their old age. This is acceptable (*ἀποδεκτον*); only here in the New Testament or LXX., and rarely if ever in classical Greek. The same idea is expressed in ch. i. 15, by *πάσης ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιος*, and in 1 Pet. ii. 19, 20, by *χάρις. Τοῦτο χάρις παρὰ Θεοῦ*, "This is acceptable with God."

Ver. 5.—*Hath her hope set on for trusteth in*, A.V. A widow indeed (see ver. 3). Desolate (*μεμονωμένη*); only here in the New Testament, rare in Greek versions of Old Testament, frequent in classical Greek); literally, left alone, or made solitary, which is also the exact meaning of "desolate," from *solus*, alone. A widow with children or grandchildren able to support her is not altogether desolate. As regards the connecting *δέ*, rendered "now" both in the A.V. and the R.V., Bishop Ellicott rightly renders it "but." The apostle is contrasting the condition of the *ὄρφανος χήρα*, who has only God to look to for help, and who passes her time in prayer, with that of the widow with children and grandchildren. The second "but" in ver. 6 is no real objection; the widow who "giveth herself to pleasure" is contrasted in her turn with the devout prayerful widow whose conduct has just been described. The inference intended to be drawn, as Ellicott justly remarks, is that the one is eminently fit, and the other eminently unfit, to be supported at the common charge of the Church. *Hath her hope set on God* (see ch. iv. 10). *Supplications and prayers* (see ch. ii. 1, note). *Night and day*. Perhaps by *night and by day* would express the genitive better (Matt. ii. 14; Luke xviii. 7), as indicating time *when*, rather than time *how long*. In Luke ii. 37, Anna the prophetess is said to worship "with fastings and supplications night and day (*νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν*)," where the accusative conveys rather more the notion of vigils prolonged through the night. As regards the order of the words, "day and night," or "night and day," there seems to be no rule. St. Mark always has "night and day" (iv. 7; v. 5); St. Luke uses both (ii. 37; xviii. 7; Acts ix. 24; xx. 31; xxvi. 7). St. Paul always "night and day," as in this passage (Acts xx. 31; 1 Thess. ii. 9; iii. 10; 2 Thess. iii. 8; 2 Tim. i. 3). St. John always "day and

night" (Rev. iv. 8; vii. 15; xii. 10; xiv. 11; xx. 10).

Ver. 6.—*Giveth herself to for liveth in*, A.V. *Giveth herself to pleasure* (*ἡ σπαταλῶσα*); only here and Jas. v. 5 (*ἐσπαταλήσατε*, "taken your pleasure," R.V., "been wanton," A.V.) in the New Testament, but found (as well as *σπατάλη* and *σπατάλος*) in Eccles. xxi. 15, and in Polybius (Liddell and Scott). Trench ('Synonyms of New Testament,' p. 191) compares and contrasts *σπηνδαίω*, *τροφάω*, and *σπαταλάω*, and says that the latter includes the idea of prodigality. The word brings into the strongest possible contrast the widow who was like Anna, and those whom St. Paul here denounces. *Is dead while she liveth*; or, *has died* (is dead) *in her lifetime*. She is dead to God, and, as Alford suggests, is no longer a living member of the Church of Christ. Compare St. Jude's expression "twice dead" (ver. 12). The expression in Rev. iii. 1 is different, unless *ζῶσα* here can have the same meaning as *ὄνομα ἔχει ὅτι ζῇ*, "though nominally alive as a Christian," etc.

Ver. 7.—*These things also command for and these things give in charge*, A.V.; *without reproach for blameless*, A.V. *These things*, etc. The apostle had been giving Timothy his own instructions concerning widows and their maintenance by their own relations. He now adds the direction that he should give these things in charge to the Ephesian Church, lest they should be guilty and blameworthy by acting in a different spirit. He probably was aware of a disposition existing in some quarters to throw the burden of maintaining their widows upon the Church. Without reproach (*ἀνεπίληπτοι*); above, ch. iii. 2, note. If they did not so they would be liable to the terrible reproach mentioned in ver. 8, that, Christians as they called themselves, they were in their conduct worse than unbelievers.

Ver. 8.—*Provideth for provide*, A.V.; *his own household for for those of his own house*, A.V. and T.R.; *unbeliever for infidel*, A.V. *Provideth* (*προνοεῖ*). Elsewhere in the New Testament only in Rom. xii. 17 and 2 Cor. viii. 21, where it has an accusative of the thing provided; here, as in classical Greek, with a genitive of the person; frequent in the LXX., and still more so in classical Greek. The substantive *προνοία* occurs in Acts xxiv. 2 and Rom. xiii. 14. *His own household*; because in many cases the widow would be actually living in the house of her child or grandchild. But even if she were not, filial duty would prompt a proper provision for her wants. *He hath denied the faith*; viz. by repudiating those duties which the Christian faith required of him (see Eph. vi. 1—3).

Ver. 9.—*Let none be enrolled as a widow*

for let not a widow be taken into the number, A.V. Let none be enrolled, etc. The proper translation seems certainly to be (Ellicott, Alford, Huther, etc.), *let a woman be enrolled as a widow not under sixty years old*; i.e. *χήρα* is the predicate, not the subject. It follows that the word "widow" here is used in a slightly different sense from that in the preceding verses, viz. in the technical sense of one belonging to the order of widows, of which it appears from the word *καταλεγέσθω* there was a regular roll kept in the Church. We do not know enough of the Church institutions of the apostolic age to enable us to say positively what their status or their functions were, but doubtless they were the germ from which the later development (of which see Bingham, bk. vii. ch. iv.) took its rise. We may gather, however, from the passage before us that their lives were specially consecrated to the service of God and the Church; that they were expected to be instant and constant in prayer, and to devote themselves to works of charity; that the apostle did not approve of their marrying again after their having embraced this life of widowhood, and therefore would have none enrolled under sixty years of age; and generally that, once on the roll, they would continue there for their life. Enrolled (*καταλεγέσθω*); only here in the New Testament or (in this sense) in the LXX.; but it is the regular classical word for enrolling, enlisting, soldiers, etc. Hence our word "catalogue." In like manner, in the times of the Empress Helena, the virgins of the Church are described as *αναγεγραμμένας ἐν τῷ τῆς ἐκκλησίας κανόνι* (Socr., i. 17), "registered in the Church's register," or list of virgins. Under three score years old. A similar rule was laid down in several early canons, which forbade the veiling of virgins before the age of forty. This care to prevent women from being entangled by vows or engagements which they had not well considered, or of which they did not know the full force, is in striking contrast with the system which allows young girls to make irrevocable vows. The participle *γεγονυῖα*, "being," belongs to this clause (not as in the A.V. to the following one), as Alford clearly shows, and as the R.V. also indicates, by putting *having been* in italics; though it does not translate *γεγονυῖα* in this clause, unless possibly the word "old" is considered as representing *γεγονυῖα*. It should be, *Let none be enrolled as widows, being under sixty years of age*. The wife of one man; see above, ch. iii. 2, the similar phrase, "the husband of one wife" (which likewise stands without any participle), and the note there. To which may be added that it is hardly conceivable that St. Paul should within the

I. TIMOTHY.

compass of a few verses (see ver. 14) recommend the marriage of young widows, and yet make the fact of a second marriage an absolute bar to a woman being enrolled among the Church widows.

Ver. 10.—*Hath* for *have*, A.V. (five times); *used hospitality* for *lodged*, A.V. Well reported of (*μαρτυρουμένη*; see ch. iii. 7 and note). This use is frequent in the Epistle to the Hebrews (vii. 8; xi. 2, 4, 5, 39), also in 3 John 6, 12. *Good works* (*ἔργοις καλοῖς*). The phrase occurs frequently in the pastoral Epistles, both in the singular and in the plural (ch. ii. 10; iii. 1; in this verse; ver. 25; vi. 18; 2 Tim. ii. 21; iii. 17; Titus i. 16; ii. 7, 14; iii. 1, 8, 14). Our Lord had first used the phrase, and taught how "good works" were to be the distinctive marks of his disciples (Matt. v. 16), as they were evidences of his own mission (John x. 32, 38). It denotes all kinds of good actions as distinguished from *sentiments*. Love, e.g. is not a *good work*. Feeding the hungry and clothing the naked and visiting the sick are *good works* (see Matt. xxv. 35, etc.). *Brought up children* (*ἐτεκνοτρόφησεν*); only here in the New Testament or LXX., but found, as well as *τεκνοτροφία*, in Aristotle. The word must mean "brought up children of her own," because *τέκνον* does not mean "a child" with reference to its age, but "a child" with reference to its parent who bare it. The only apparent exception in Holy Scripture is 1 Thess. ii. 7, where the nurse's *alumni* are called "her own children," but obviously this is no real exception. The classical usage is the same. We must, therefore, understand the apostle here to mean "if she hath brought up her children well and carefully, and been a good mother to them." The precept corresponds to that laid down for an *ἐπίσκοπος* in ch. iii. 4. Possibly, as Grotius suggests, a contrast may be intended with the conduct of some heathen mothers, who, if they were very poor, exposed their children. Used hospitality to (*ἐξενόδωχεν*); only here in the New Testament or LXX., but, as well as *ξενόδοκος* and *ξενοδοχία*, not uncommon in classical Greek. The common form in the New Testament is *ξενοῖ*. (For the inculcation of hospitality, see ch. iii. 2, note, and 3 John 5.) *Washed the saints' feet* (see John xiii. 5—8; and comp. Luke vii. 44, where the omission to provide water to wash the feet of a guest is reprobated as inhospitable). The saints (Rom. xii. 13). *Hath relieved* (*ἐπήρκεσεν*); only here and twice in ver. 16 in the New Testament, and in 1 Macc. viii. 26 and xi. 35; but common in classical Greek. The afflicted (*τοῖς θλιβομένοις*); used of any kind of trouble or afflictions (*θλίψις*); compare, for the precept, Rom. xiii. 15. Diligently followed

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(ἐπηκολούθησε; comp. 1 Pet. ii. 21). The idea is somewhat similar to that of "pressing on toward the goal," in Phil. iii. 14 (see also ver. 12, where διώκω is rendered in A.V., "I follow after"). Good work. Here ἔργον ἀγαθόν, as in Acts ix. 36; Rom. ii. 7, 10; xiii. 3; 2 Cor. ix. 8; Eph. ii. 10; and frequently in the pastoral Epistles (ch. ii. 10).

Ver. 11.—*Younger for the younger, A.V.; waxed for begun to wax, A.V.; desire to for will, A.V. Refuse.* Note the wisdom of Paul, who will not have the young widows admitted into the roll of Church widows, lest, after the first grief for the loss of their husbands has subsided, they should change their minds, and wish to return to the world and its pleasures, and so incur the guilt of drawing back their hands from the plough. Would that the Church had always imitated this wisdom and this consideration for the young, whether young priests or young monks and nuns! *Waxed wanton against (καταστρηνιδώσει).* This word only occurs here, but the simple στρηνιδάω is found in Rev. xviii. 7, 9, and is used by the Greek poets of the new comedy in the sense of τρυφάν, to be luxurious (Schleusner, 'Lex.'). Trench ('Synonyms of New Testament'), comparing this word with τρυφάν and σπαταλάν, ascribes to it the sense of "petulance" from fulness, like the state of Jeshurun, who waxed fat and kicked (Deut. xxxii. 15); and so Liddell and Scott give the sense of "to be over-strong." The sense, therefore, is that these young widows, in the wantonness and unsubdued worldliness of their hearts, reject the yoke of Christ, and kick against the widow's life of prayer and supplication day and night. And so they return to the world and its pleasures, which they had renounced.

Ver. 12.—*Condemnation for damnation, A.V.; rejected for cast off, A.V. Condemnation; κρίμα, variously translated in the A.V. "damnation," "condemnation," and "judgment." The word means a "judgment," "decision," or "sentence," but generally an adverse sentence, a "condemnation." And this is the meaning of the English word "damnation," which has only recently acquired the signification of "eternal damnation." Rejected (ῥέειπον); literally, have set aside, or displaced, and hence disregarded, an oath, treaty, promise, or the like. In the A.V. variously rendered "reject," "despise," "bring to nothing," "frustrate," "disannul," "cast off." The κρίμα which these widows brought upon themselves was that, whereas they had devoted themselves to a life of prayer and special service of the Church, they had now set aside this their first faith, and returned to the ordinary pleasures and avocations of the world.*

Ver. 13.—*Also to be for to be, A.V.; going*

for wandering, A.V. Also seems unnecessary, as "withal" seems to represent ἅμα καί. Learn to be idle (ἀργαί μανθάνουσιν). This is a construction which has no similar passage in Greek to support it, except one very doubtful one in Plato, 'Euthydemus' (vol. iv. p. 105, Bekker's edit.). But the other constructions proposed, viz., to construe μανθάνουσι, "they are inquisitive, or, curious," as Grotius and substantially Bengel; or to take περιερχόμεναι after μανθάνουσι, "they learn to go about" (Vulgate, De Weite, etc.), cannot be justified by examples either, as μανθάνειν has always either an accusative case or an infinitive mood after it, unless it is used in quite a different sense, as in the passage from Herod., iii. 1, quoted by Alford: διαβεβλημένος . . . οὐ μανθάνεις, "You are slandered without being aware of it." In this difficulty it is best to take the sense given in the A.V. and the R.V., following Chrysostom, etc., and of moderns Winer, Ellicott, Alford, etc., which the general turn and balance of the sentence favours. Going about (περιερχόμεναι); comp. Acts xxix. 18, where there is the same idea of reproach in the term. It is used in a good sense in Heb. xi. 37. Tattlers (φλύαροι); only here in the New Testament, and once only in the LXX. (4 Macc. v. 10), but common in classical Greek. It means "a trifling silly talker." The verb φλυαρέω occurs in 3 John 10. Busybodies (περιεργοί); only here and Acts xix. 19 in the New Testament or LXX., but not uncommon in classical Greek in the sense in which it is used here. The verb περιεργάζεσθαι occurs in 2 Thess. iii. 11 in the same sense, "meddling with what does not concern you."

Ver. 14.—*Desire for will, A.V.; widows (in italics) for women, A.V.; rule the household for guide the house, A.V.; for reviling for to speak reproachfully, A.V. Widows.* As the whole discourse is about widows, it is better to supply this as the substantive understood in νεωτέρας. In ver. 11 we have νεωτέρας χήρας. The οὐν which precedes is a further proof that this direction or command of the apostle's springs from what he had just been saying about the young widows, and therefore that what follows relates to them, and not to women generally. In order to avoid the scandal mentioned in ver. 11 of the young widows first dedicating their widowhood to Christ, and then drawing back and marrying, he directs that they should follow the natural course and marry, in doing which they would be blameless. Bear children (τεκνογονεῖν); here only in the New Testament or LXX.; but τεκνογονία occurs in ch. ii. 15 (where see note). Rule the household (οἰκοδεσποτεῖν; here only in this sense); act the part of οἰκοδεσποτα, the mistress of a family (Plutarch and

elsewhere). *Οικοδεσπότης* frequent in the New Testament, and kindred words are used in classical Greek. For *reviling* (*λοιδορίας χάριν*). The adversary (*ὁ ἀντικείμενος*), the opponent of Christianity, was always seeking some occasion to speak reproachfully of Christians and revile them. Any misconduct on the part of Christian widows would give him the occasion he was looking for. They must be doubly careful, therefore, lest they should bring reproach upon the Name of Christ (comp. Jas. ii. 7; 1 Pet. ii. 12; iv. 4, 14, 15). "*Λοιδωρίας χάριν* is added . . . to *ἐφορμὴν διδόναι* to specify the manner in which the occasion would be used" (Ellicott). Do not give the adversary a starting-point from which he may be able to carry out his desire to revile the people of God.

Ver. 15.—*Already some are for some are already, A.V.* Some. This is generally understood of some widows who had already given occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully, by turning aside from the path of Christian virtue which they had begun to walk in, and following Satan who had beguiled them into the path of vice and folly. But the words are capable of another meaning, equally arising from the preceding verse, viz. that some have already followed the example of Satan, "the accuser of the brethren," and have begun to revile Christianity, taking occasion from the conduct of some who were called Christians. These revilers might be not unbelieving Jews or heathen, but apostate or heretical Jews like those of whom the same verb (*ἐκτρέπασθαι*) is used in ch. i. 6 and 2 Tim. iv. 4. In something of the same spirit St. Paul called Elymas the sorcerer "a child of the devil," because he sought to turn away Sergius Paulus from the faith, probably by speaking evil of Barnabas and Saul.

Ver. 16.—*Woman for man or woman, A.V.* and T.R.; *hath for have, A.V.*; *her for them, A.V.*; *burdened for charged, A.V.* If any woman, etc. So the preponderance of the best manuscripts, and the texts of Lachmann, Buttmann, Tischendorf, etc. But the T.R. is retained by Alford, Ellicott, 'Speaker's Commentary,' and others. If the R.V. is right, the woman only is mentioned as being the person who has the management of the house. The precept here seems to be an extension of that in ver. 4, which relates only to children and grandchildren, and to be given, moreover, with special reference to Christian widows who had no believing relations to care for them, and so were necessarily cast upon the Church. Let her relieve them (*ἐπαρκετω*, as in ver. 10). Widows indeed (*ταῖς ὄρφναις χήραις*, as in vers. 2 and 5).

Ver. 17.—*Those for they, A.V.*; *in teaching for doctrine, A.V.* The elders (*πρεσβύ-*

τεροι); here in its technical sense of "presbyters," which in the first age were the ruling body in every Church (see Acts xiv. 23; xx. 2, 4, 6, 22), after the analogy of the elders of the Jews. Rule well (*ὡς καλῶς προεστῶτες*). The presbyters or elders were the chiefs, rulers, or presidents, of the Church (see Rom. xii. 8; 1 Thess. v. 12; and above, ch. iii. 4, 5). It seems that they did not necessarily teach and preach, but those who did so, labouring in the Word and teaching, were especially worthy of honour. Double honour (see note on ver. 3) means simply increased honour, not exactly twice as much as some one else, or with arithmetical exactness. So the word *διπλοῦς* is used in Matt. xxiii. 15; Rev. xviii. 6; and by the LXX. in Isa. xl. 2; Jer. xvi. 18; and elsewhere also in classical Greek. And so we say, "twice as good," "twice as much," with the same indefinite meaning. The Word and teaching. The "Word" means generally "the Word of God," as we have "preach the Word," "hear the Word," "the ministry of the Word," "doers of the Word," etc. And although there is no article before *λόγῳ* here, yet, considering the presence of the preposition *ἐν*, and St. Paul's less careful use of the article in his later Epistles, this absence is not sufficient to counterbalance the weight of those considerations which lead to the conclusion that "labouring in the Word" refers to the Word of God. The alternative rendering of "oral discourse" or "in speaking" seems rather weak. Teaching would mean catechetical instruction and similar explanatory teaching. Labour (*οἰκονομῶντες*); a word very frequently used by St. Paul of spiritual labours (Rom. xvi. 6, 12; 1 Cor. xv. 10; Gal. iv. 11; Col. i. 29, etc.).

Ver. 18.—*When he for that, A.V.*; *hire for reward, A.V.* Thou shalt not muzzle, etc. This passage, from Deut. xxv., which is quoted and commented upon, in the same sense as here, in 1 Cor. ix. 9, shows distinctly that reward was to go with labour. The ox was not to be hindered from eating some portion of the grain which he was treading out. The preacher of the gospel was to live of the gospel. The labourer is worthy of his hire (*ἄξιός ἐστιν ἐργάτης τοῦ μισθοῦ αὐτοῦ*). In Matt. x. 10 the words are the same as here, except that *τῆς τροφῆς* (his meat) is substituted for *τοῦ μισθοῦ*. But in Luke x. 7 the words are identical with those here used, even to the omission (in the R.T.) of the verb *ἐστιν*. The conclusion is inevitable that the writer of this Epistle was acquainted with and quoted from St. Luke's Gospel; and further, that he deemed it, or at least the saying of the Lord Jesus recorded in it, to be of equal authority with "ἡ γραφή," the Scripture. If this Epistle was

written by St. Paul after his first imprisonment at Rome, we may feel tolerably certain that he was acquainted with the Gospel of St. Luke, so that there is no improbability in his quoting from it. His reference to another saying of the Lord Jesus in Acts xx. 35 gives additional probability to it. The passage in 2 Tim. iv. 18 seems also to be a direct reference to the Lord's Prayer, as contained in the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke. St. Paul does not directly call the words ἡ γραφή, only treats them as of equal authority, which, if they were the words of Christ, of course they were.

Ver. 19.—*Except at the mouth of for but before, A.V.* An elder; here clearly a presbyter, as the context proves. Receive (παράσχευ); give ear to, entertain; as in Acts xxii. 18, "They will not receive thy testimony." At the mouth of, etc. There is a reference to the law in Numb. xxxv. 30; Deut. xix. 15, and elsewhere (to which our Lord also refers, John viii. 17), and St. Paul applies the principle of the law to Timothy's dealings with presbyters who might be accused of not "ruling well." He was not to encourage *delatores*, secret accusers and defamers, but if any one had a charge to make against a ruler, it was to be done *in the presence* of witnesses (ἐν with a genitive). A doubt arises whether "the witnesses" here spoken of were to be witnesses able to support the accusation, or merely witnesses in whose presence the accusation must be made. The juxtaposition of the legal terms κατηγορία and ἐπὶ μαρτύρων favours the strict meaning of μαρτύρων, witnesses able to support the κατηγορία. And, therefore, the direction to Timothy is, "Suffer no man to accuse a presbyter unless he is accompanied by two or three witnesses who are ready to back up the accusation." The italic *the mouth of*, in the R.V., is not necessary or indeed justified. There is no ellipsis of στόματος. Ἐπὶ δύο ἢ τριῶν μαρτύρων, "before two or three witnesses," is good classical Greek.

Ver. 20.—*Reprove for rebuke, A.V.; in the sight of for before, A.V.; the rest for others, A.V.; be in fear for fear, A.V.* Reprove; ἐλέγχε, not ἐπιτιμᾷ, as in ver. 1 (see Matt. xviii. 15). There, the fault being a private one, the reproof is to be administered in private. But in the case of the sinning presbyter, which is that here intended, Timothy is to reprove the offender "before all," that others also may fear, and may be deterred by their fear from committing a like offence.

Ver. 21.—*In the sight of for before, A.V.; Christ Jesus for the Lord Jesus Christ, A.V. and T.R.; prejudice for preferring one before another, A.V.* I charge thee, etc. It has

been well remarked that the solemnity of this charge indicates the temptation which there might be to Timothy to shrink from reproofing men of weight and influence—"rulers" in the congregation, and "elders" both in age and by office, young as he himself was (ch. iv. 12). Perhaps he had in view some particular case in the Ephesian Church. Charge (διαμαρτύρομαι; not παραγγέλλω, as ch. vi. 13); rather, *I adjure thee*. The strict sense of διαμαρτύρομαι is "I call heaven and earth to witness the truth of what I am saying;" and then, by a very slight metonymy, "I declare a thing," or "I ask a thing," "as in the presence of those witnesses who are either named or understood." Here the witnesses are named: God, and Christ Jesus, and the elect angels. In 2 Tim. ii. 14 it is "the Lord;" in 2 Tim. iv. 1 God and Jesus Christ, as also in ch. vi. 13. In the passages where the word has the force of "testifying" (Luke xvi. 18; Acts ii. 40; x. 42; xviii. 5; 1 Thess. iv. 6, etc.), no witnesses are named, but great solemnity and earnestness are implied. The elect angels. This is the only passage where it is predicated of the angels that they are *elect*. But as there is repeated mention in Holy Scripture of the fallen angels (Matt. xxv. 41; 1 Cor. vi. 3; 2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude 6; Rev. xii. 7, 9), the obvious interpretation is that St. Paul, in this solemn adjuration, added the epithet to indicate more distinctly the "holy angels," as they are frequently described (Matt. xxv. 31; Luke ix. 26, etc.), or "the angels of God" or "of heaven" (Matt. xxii. 30; xxiv. 36; Luke xii. 8, 9; John i. 51). Possibly the mention of Satan in ver. 15, or some of the rising Gnostic opinions about angels (Col. ii. 18), may have suggested the epithet. The reason for the unusual addition of "the angels" is more difficult to adduce with certainty. But perhaps 2 Tim. iv. 1 gives us the clue, where the apostle shows that in appealing to Jesus Christ he has a special eye to the great and final judgment. Now, in the descriptions of the last judgment, the angels are constantly spoken of as accompanying our Lord (Matt. xvi. 27; xxv. 31; Mark viii. 48; Luke ix. 26; xii. 8, 9; 2 Thess. i. 7, etc.). If St. Paul, therefore, had in his mind the great judgment-day when he thus invoked the names of God and of Christ, he would very naturally also make mention of the elect angels. And so Bishop Bull, quoted in the 'Speaker's Commentary,' Without prejudice (χωρὶς προκρίματος); here only in the New Testament, and not found in the LXX. or classical Greek, though the verb προκρίνω occurs in both. Although the English word "prejudice" seems at first sight an apt rendering of πρόκριμα, it does not really give the sense

so accurately as "preference." We commonly mean by "prejudice" a judgment formed prior to examination, which prevents our judging rightly or fairly when we come to the examination, which, however, is not the meaning of the Latin *præjudicium*. But *προκρίνω* means rather "to prefer" a person, or thing, to others. And therefore *πρόκριμα* means "preference," or "partiality," or, as the A.V. has it, "preferring one before another." The two meanings may be thus expressed. "Prejudice," in the English use of the word, is when a person who has to judge a cause upon evidence prejudices it without evidence, and so does not give its proper weight to the evidence. "Preference" is when he gives different measure to different persons, according as he is swayed by partiality, or interest, or favour. St. Paul charges Timothy to measure out exactly equal justice to all persons alike. By partiality (*κατὰ πρόκρισιν*). This also is an *ἄραξ λεγόμενον* as far as the New Testament is concerned, and is not found in the LXX., but is found, as well as the verb *προκλίνω*, in classical Greek. It means literally the "inclination" of the scales to one side or the other, and hence a "bias" of the mind to one party or the other. The balance of justice in the hands of Timothy was to be equal.

Ver. 22.—*Hastily for suddenly*, A.V. Lay hands, etc. Surely if we are guided by St. Paul's own use of the phrase, *ἐπιθεσις χειρῶν*, in the only two places in his writings where it occurs (ch. iv. 14 and 2 Tim. i. 6), we must abide by the ancient interpretation of these words, that they mean the laying on of hands in ordination. So also in Acts vi. 6 and xiii. 3, *ἐπιτίθεναι χεῖρας* is "to ordain." And the context here requires the same sense. The solemn injunction in the preceding verse, to deal impartially in judging even the most influential elder, naturally suggests the caution not to be hasty in ordaining any one to be an elder. Great care and previous inquiry were necessary before admitting any man, whatever might be his pretensions or position, to a holy office. A bishop who, on the spur of the moment, with improper haste, should ordain one who afterwards required reproof as *ἁμαρτάνων*, sinning (ver. 20), would have a partnership in the man's sin, and in the evil consequences that flowed from it. And then it follows, *Keep thyself pure*; i.e. clear and guiltless (2 Cor. vii. 11), which he would not be if he was involved in the sin of the guilty elder. Observe that the stress is upon "thyself."

Ver. 23.—*Be no longer a drinker of drink no longer*, A.V. Be . . . a drinker of water (*ὕδροποτοι*); here only in the New Testament. It is found in some codices of

the LXX. in Dan. i. 12, and also in classical Greek. We learn from hence the interesting fact that Timothy was, in modern parlance, a total abstainer; and we also learn that, in St. Paul's judgment, total abstinence was not to be adhered to if injurious to the health. The epithet, "a little," should not be overlooked. Was Luke, the beloved physician, with St. Paul when he wrote this prescription (see 2 Tim. iv. 11)? It is a so interesting to have this passing allusion to Timothy's bad health, and this instance of St. Paul's thoughtful consideration for him. *Infirmities* (*ἀσθενείας*); in the sense of *sicknesses*, attacks of illness.

Ver. 24.—*Evident for open beforehand*, A.V.; *unto for to*, A.V.; *men also for men*, A.V. Some men's sins, etc. St. Paul is evidently here recurring to the topic which he had been dealing with ever since ver. 17, viz. Timothy's duty as a bishop, to whom was entrusted the selection of persons for the office of elder, or presbyter, and also the maintaining of discipline among his clergy. Alford sees the connection of the precept about drinking a little wine with what went before, and with this twenty-fourth verse, in the supposed circumstance that Timothy's weak health had somewhat weakened the vigour of his rule; and that the recommendation to leave off water-drinking was given more with a view to the firmer discharge of those duties than merely for his bodily comfort. This may be so. But there is nothing unlike St. Paul's manner in the supposition that he had done with the subject in hand at the end of the twenty-second verse, and passed on to the friendly hint with regard to Timothy's health, but then subjoined the fresh remarks in vers. 24 and 25, which were an after-thought. *Evident* (*πρόδηλοι*); only found in the New Testament, in Heb. vii. 14 besides these two verses, and in the apocryphal books of the Old Testament. It is common, with the kindred forms, *προδηλώω*, *προδήλωσις*, etc., in classical Greek. It is doubted whether *πρό* in this compound verb has the force of "beforehand," as in the A.V., and not rather that of "before the eyes of all," and therefore only intensifies the meaning of *δηλόω*. But the natural force of *πρό* in composition certainly is "before" in point of time; and hence in a compound like *πρόδηλος* would mean "evident before it is examined," which of course is equivalent to "very evident." St. Paul's meaning, therefore, would be: Some men's sins are notorious, requiring no careful inquiry in order to find them out; nay, they of themselves go before—before the sinner himself—unto judgment. But there are also some whose sins follow after them. It is not till after close inquiry that they are found out. They go up to the

judgment-seat apparently innocent, but after a while their sins come trooping up to their condemnation. This enforces the caution, "Lay hands hastily on no man."

Ver. 25.—*In like manner for likewise, A.V.; there are good works that are evident for the good works of some are manifest beforehand, A.V.; such as for they that, A.V. There are good works, etc.* It is much best to understand *τινῶν*, as the A.V. does, and render *the good works of some*, answering to *τινῶν αἱ ἀγαθὰς* of ver. 24. Such as are otherwise—i.e. not manifest beforehand—

cannot be hid. "They will be seen and recognized some time or other" (Ellicott). Alford seems to catch the true spirit of the passage when he says, "The tendency of this verse is to warn Timothy against hasty condemnation, as the former had done against hasty approval. Sometimes thou wilt find a man's good character go before him, . . . but where this is not so, . . . be not rash to condemn; thou mayest on examination discover if there be any good deeds accompanying him: for they cannot be hidden."

HOMILETICS.

Vers. 1, 2.—*Propriety.* Propriety of conduct in the different relations of life is the application of true charity to the particular circumstances of the case. Charity, while in all cases it has the same essence, seeking the real good of the person with whom it is dealing, varies its mode of application according to various circumstances. There is in charity always a consideration of what is due to others, a scrupulous and delicate appreciation of the difference of positions, and consequent differences of feeling, which may be expected, in different persons. In the natural family men do not treat their fathers and their children in the same manner. An upper servant does not deal out the same measure to his master and to the servants that are under him. There may be the same truth and the same charity, but there is a different outward expression of them. It is a great and serious mistake to think that impartiality requires an identity of proceeding in dealing with different people. A wise charity knows how to discriminate, and to avoid the risk of defeating its own ends by wounding the just susceptibilities of those with whom it has to do. It is in accordance with this view that St. Paul here gives directions to the youthful Timothy how to exercise his episcopal authority over the different persons subject to it. The same sharp rebuke that might be suitable for a young man would be out of place in the case of an old one. Timothy must not forget the respect that is due from a young man to an old one, even while exercising his episcopal functions. And so with regard to the elderly women of his flock, he will know how to treat them with filial respect; and with regard to the young women, he will know how to infuse a brotherly spirit into his intercourse with them, avoiding every approach to any kind of familiarity inconsistent with that purity of thought which regulates the intercourse between brothers and sisters. Then will charity have her perfect work.

Vers. 3-16.—*Church charities.* One of the most difficult problems to solve in any well-ordered human society is so to administer charity to the indigent as not to encourage indigence which might be avoided—not to injure the character by endeavours to benefit the body. It is certain that the expectation of being provided for by others, without any efforts of his own, has a tendency to check those exertions by which a man may provide for himself. But it is no less certain that there is room in the world for the exercise of a wholesome charity, and that to dry up the streams of benevolence would be as great an injury to the givers as to the receivers. The result is that great care and much wisdom are requisite to regulate the administration of all charities on a large scale. The early Church, with an instinctive wisdom, directed its chief care to the support of widows. Here the main cause of the indigence, at least, was one which no human forethought could prevent—the death of the bread-winner. But even in their case many prudent cautions were interposed. The widow must have age of not less than threescore years, as well as widowhood, to commend her. She must be desolate, without any relations or friends whose natural duty it would be to support her. She must have established a good Christian character in the days of her prosperity, and shown her love to Christ, and the people of Christ, by works of mercy and pity. In like manner all public charities should be administered so as to encourage industry and to

check idleness; so as to countenance virtue and rebuke vice; so as to prevent the unworthy from appropriating the provision that was intended for the worthy and unfortunate. In a word, in the administration of charitable funds, charity and wisdom must work hand-in-hand.

Vers. 17—25.—*Duties and privileges of the clergy.* The *duties* of the clergy are to rule and to labour. The *privileges* of the clergy are honour and pay. The clergy are rulers; not lords and tyrants, not domineering over conscience or deeds, but leaders (*προεστώτες*, here; *ἡγούμενοι*, Heb. xiii. 7), presidents, officers of the great Church army, going before them in every hard service and difficult duty, regulating their counsels by wise advice, leading their worship, ordering their discipline, taking the lead in the management of their common affairs. And the clergy are labourers. Not drones doing nothing, and eating the fruit of other men's toil, but labouring in the Word and doctrine of Christ. Theirs is a double labour: they labour first to learn, and then they labour to teach others what they have learnt themselves. They study the Holy Scriptures, and give the Church the benefit of their studies. Nor are their labours light or desultory. It is the *hard toil* (*κοπιῶντες*) of mind and body, the continuous toil of a lifetime. These are their duties. Their *privileges* are honour and pay—honour in proportion to their labours for the Church and the fruit of those labours; honour due to their spiritual dignity as those whom the Holy Ghost has set over the flock of Christ. And with this honour—expressed by the title of “reverend” prefixed to their names—is also due pay, support and maintenance at the Church's charge. The ox must not be muzzled while he treads out the corn for others, nor must the labourer be defrauded of his hire when his honest work is done. They that preach the gospel are to live of the gospel. The Churches which they serve must set their minds free, as far as may be, from worldly cares, by providing for their maintenance while they give themselves to the Word of God and prayer. It is obvious how entirely in accordance with these apostolic sayings is the setting apart of endowments for the permanent support of those who are engaged in the ministry of the Word, and the feeding of the flock of Christ. The exhortation to the bishop to lay hands hastily on no man, and to be impartial in all his dealings, follows naturally from the consideration of the duties and the privileges of the priesthood.

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Vers. 1, 2.—*Directions how to treat members of the Church according to the distinctions of age and sex.* I. THE CONDUCT OF TIMOTHY TOWARD ELDERLY MEN. “Reprimand not an elderly person, but exhort him as a brother.” The allusion is not to an official elder of the Church, but to any elderly member of it. 1. *Such persons might possibly be guilty of serious shortcomings*, warranting private admonition, if not the exercise of discipline. Their conduct would have a worse effect than that of more youthful offenders. 2. *Timothy must not use sharpness or severity in dealing with such persons*, because he must remember what is becoming on account of his own youth. He should rather use “entreaty” on a footing of brotherly equality. His zeal ought not to interfere with the reverence due to age. Let the old be treated with humility and gentleness.

II. THE CONDUCT OF TIMOTHY TOWARD YOUNGER MEN. “The younger men as brothers.” He may use greater freedom with them, as being on an equality as to age. He must not show airs of assumption toward them, but may use more freedom in reproving their faults.

III. HIS CONDUCT TOWARD ELDERLY WOMEN. “Elderly women as mothers.” He must show them due deference and respect. If they should err on any point, they must be entreated with all tenderness, as children entreat their mothers.

IV. HIS CONDUCT TOWARD THE YOUNGER WOMEN. “The younger as sisters, with all purity.” There must be, on the one hand, the freedom of a brother with sisters; but, on the other hand, a marked circumspection so as to avoid all ground of suspicion or scandal.—T. C.

Vers. 3—7.—*Directions with regard to widows.* The gospel provides for the helpless.

I. THE CLAIMS OF WIDOWS. 1. *These were abundantly recognized in Old Testament*

times. The fatherless and the widow were commended to the special care of the Israelites. The garments of widows were never to be taken in pledge. The man was cursed who perverted the judgment of the widow. The widow was never to be afflicted or made a prey (Deut. xvi. 11; xxvii. 19; Jer. vii. 6; Isa. x. 2). 2. *The claims of widows were officially recognized in New Testament times.* The order of deaconship arose out of the necessity of widows (Acts vi. 1—7).

II. THE DIFFERENT CLASSES OF WIDOWS IN THE CHURCH. "Honour widows that are widows indeed." There are three classes of widows referred to by the apostle. 1. *There are widows who are not only deeply religious, but quite destitute.* She who is a widow indeed is "desolate, has set her hope in God, and abides in supplications and prayers night and day." (1) There are widows without husband, without children or grandchildren, and without means of living. They have no friends to cheer the loneliness or relieve the necessities of their widowed life. (2) They are deeply religious and trustful. "She has set her hope in God," who is the Husband of the widow; and is constant in prayers like Anna the prophetess, to that God who gives her a daily supply of comforts, and cheers her in her solitude. 2. *There are widows who are not so destitute,* for they have children and grandchildren to provide for their wants. 3. *There are widows who are fond of gaiety and pleasure, and destitute of religion.* "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." They are dead spiritually, like those who "have a name to live, but are dead" (Rev. iii. 1). "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die" (Rom. viii. 13). This class of widows resembled the daughters of Sodom (Ezek. xvi. 49). There was in their case the union of soul and body, but no quickening principle of spiritual life. They savour the things that be of men rather than the things that be of God.

III. THE DUTY OF THE CHURCH IN RELATION TO THESE DIFFERENT CLASSES OF WIDOWS. 1. *The Church was not bound to support or assist widows with children or grandchildren,* who were therefore to be taught "to show piety at home, and to requite their parents." The Church was not to be burdened with their support. Their relatives were not exempt under the gospel from the necessity of providing for them. The apostle adds that the discharge of this oft-forgotten duty is "good and acceptable before God" (Eph. vi. 2, 3; Mark vii. 10, 11). 2. *The Church owned no obligation of any sort to pleasure-loving widows,* except to warn them of the sin, folly, and danger of their life. 3. *The Church was to pay due regard to "widows indeed" who were destitute of all resources.* "Honour widows that are widows indeed." The term implies more than deference or respect; such widows were entitled to receive relief from the Christian community. It was a loving duty to provide for such sad-hearted, friendless beings.

IV. THE NECESSITY OF MAKING A RULE FOR THE CHURCH'S GUIDANCE. "These things command, that they may be without reproach." The injunction was necessary for the Church's sake, that it might not neglect its proper duty to this destitute class, and for the sake of the various classes of widows and their relatives, who needed to be without reproach, as they were supposedly members of the Church.—T. C.

Ver. 8.—*The duty of providing for one's own household.* The growth of the Church necessitated a careful regard to this duty.

I. THE DUTY HERE ENJOINED. "If any provides not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever." 1. *This passage asserts the obligations that spring out of family relationship.* It points to the duty of supporting relatives, and all who live under one roof, who through poverty may have become dependent upon us. 2. *The gospel does not relax, but rather strengthens, the ties of natural kinship.* The Essenes would not give relief to their relatives without the permission of their teachers, though they might help others in need.

II. THE NEGLECT OF THIS DUTY INVOLVES A PRACTICAL DENIAL OF THE FAITH. 1. *It is a denial of the faith,* not in words, but in works, for it is a denial of the duty of love, which is the practical outcome of faith; for "faith worketh by love." There may have been a tendency at Ephesus, as in Churches to which James wrote, to rest content with a mere profession of the truth, without the habit of self-denial. 2. *Such conduct would place the Christian professor in a position far below that of the heathen unbeliever,* who recognized the duty of supporting relatives as one of his best principles. It would be a

serious dishonour to Christ and the gospel to neglect duties held in highest honour by the heathen. The light of the gospel greatly aggravates the sin of such persons.—T. C.

Vers. 9, 10.—*Particular directions as to the class of widows commended to the Church's sympathy and support.* These persons are variously regarded by commentators as simply destitute widows, or as deaconesses, or as presbyteresses. The most simple and natural explanation is that they belonged to the first class, for the directions here given apply to what the Church is to do for such widows, not what duty is required of them in the Church administration.

I. THE ENROLMENT OF WIDOWS IN THE ALMONER'S LIST OF THE CHURCH. "Let none be enrolled as a widow under threescore years old." 1. *The existence of such a list is implied in Acts vi. 1*, where a murmuring is said to have arisen because "the widows were neglected in the daily ministration." There are also traces of such a list in the earlier Christian writers. 2. *Such a class would be recruited from the ordinary vicissitudes of life*, from the special persecutions that followed the gospel, and perhaps also from the separations from polygamous husbands brought about through the influence of Christianity.

II. THE QUALIFICATIONS OF WIDOWS FOR A PLACE IN THE CHURCH'S LIST. 1. *As to age.* "Not under threescore years old." As this age marks a relatively greater degree of senility in the East than in the West, the widows must be regarded as of the infirm class, and therefore as not in any degree able for the active duties of life. This one consideration inclines us to believe that they did not belong to the order of deaconesses or presbyteresses. If widows had been enrolled at a much earlier age, they must have become a serious burden for a great length of time upon the Church's liberality. Therefore young widows were not to be enrolled at all. 2. *As to her previous married life.* "The wife of one man." (1) This does not mean that she should not have been twice married, because (a) the apostle counsels the younger women to marry again (ver. 14), and sanctions second marriages (Rom. vii. 1); (b) because the ascetic idea of married life, which some would associate with widows holding a certain ecclesiastical rank, received no sanction from the apostle. (2) It does not mean that she should not have had several husbands at one time, for polyandry was quite unusual. (3) It signifies that she should never have stood related but to one living husband; not divorced from one husband and then married to another—a chaste and faithful spouse, true to her marriage vow. 3. *As to her reputation for good works.* "Well reported of in respect to good works." There must not only be no evil spoken of her, but she must have a reputation for good works. This reputation covers five facts of goodness. (1) "If she hath brought up children." This would imply self-sacrifice, sympathy and zeal for youthful training. She would train her children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, commanding them like Abraham to keep the way of the Lord, from which they would not so easily depart in after-life. (2) "If she hath lodged strangers." She may have seen better days, and had frequent opportunities of showing hospitality to Christian travellers moving from place to place. The readiness to welcome strangers was most characteristic of the early Christians. (3) "If she hath washed the saints' feet;" in token, not only of conventional hospitality, but of deep humility after the highest of all examples. (4) "If she hath relieved the afflicted." Not by mere gifts, but by matronly sympathy and encouragement, implying the visitation of the distressed in their homes. (5) "If she hath diligently followed every good work." She must not have wearied in well-doing, but have followed that which was good with eagerness, constancy, and true fidelity to God and man.—T. C.

Vers. 11—15.—*Directions with regard to young widows.* I. THE YOUNGER WIDOWS WERE NOT TO BE ENROLLED ON THE LIST OF THE CHURCH'S PENSIONERS. "Younger widows decline." This did not imply that destitute widows, however young, would be excluded from occasional help from the Church's funds, but they were not to be made a permanent charge upon the resources of the Church. They were young enough to labour for their own living, or, as the apostle advised, they might marry a second time, and thus obtain a provision for themselves.

II. THE REASON FOR DECLINING SUCH WIDOWS. "For when they shall wax wanton against Christ, they desire to marry." 1. *This language does not imply that they had,*

so to speak, taken Christ for their Bridegroom, and then proved shamelessly unfaithful to their vows. This thought belongs to the ascetic ideas of a later period, as if the widows in question had taken the irrevocable engagement of nuns or of other ecclesiastical persons. They might, indeed, have remarried not only without blame, but by the direct counsel of the apostle himself. 2. *Neither does it imply that they had been untrue to the memory of their first husbands.* 3. *The case supposed is that of some young widows, who had taken their place among others of their world-renouncing class in the list of the Church's widows, and had drawn back into a luxurious, pleasure-loving habit of life.* There is no breach of the promise of widowhood either expressed or implied in the passage, and such a breach could not be interpreted by itself as equivalent to a renunciation of the Christian faith. The case supposed is that of a departure from the proprieties of widowed life, in connection with a Christian profession, which only too surely indicated a virtual repudiation of the faith. 4. *The judgment that attached to their conduct implied this virtual renunciation of faith.* "Having condemnation because they set at nought their first faith." (1) Not their faith to their first husbands; (2) not their vow or promise to remain in widowhood, which might be called their former faith, but not their first faith; but (3) their simple faith in Christ, when they were baptized into his Name and devoted themselves to his service. They set it at nought by not walking according to it, their conversation not becoming their profession of it. Their condemnation, or, rather, their judgment, is not to be regarded as eternal, because it might be removed by a timely repentance.

III. THE INJURIOUS AND SCANDALOUS EFFECTS OF SUCH A LIFE. "And withal they learn also to be idle, going about from house to house; and not only idle, but talkers and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not." These young widows, being under no necessity to labour for their living—for they were supported by the funds of the Church—used their leisure badly. 1. *They were idle.* (1) This habit of life is forbidden; for Christians are to be "not slothful in business." (2) It leads to misdirected activity; for such widows "wander from house to house," because they have no resources within themselves. 2. *They become loose talkers,* babbling out whatever comes into their minds. "From leisure springs that curiosity which is the mother of garrulity" (Calvin). 3. *They become busybodies,* with a perverted activity in the concerns of others which implies a neglect of their own. This meddling spirit leads to misunderstandings and mischiefs of many kinds. 4. *They become talkers of scandal,* "speaking things which they ought not"—things which may be false, or, if true, are not to be repeated from house to house.—T. C.

Vers. 14, 15.—*Directions to such young widows.* The case is one for special guidance.

I. A RETURN TO THE SPHERE OF DOMESTIC DUTIES IS ADVISED BY THE APOSTLE. "I wish, therefore, that the younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house, give no occasion for the adversary to reproach." 1. *There is nothing in this counsel to encourage a resort to ascetic life,* or an escape from the ordinary obligations of society. The over-valuation of ascetic life has been the great means of disparaging and discouraging the piety of common life. Religion was made, not for an idle, but for a busy world. 2. *The return to home-ties would probably break the force of temptations to loose living.* Idleness would thus be counteracted, as well as the wantonness against Christ previously censured. The woman would thus be "saved by child-bearing, if she continued in faith and holiness with sobriety" (ch. ii. 15). 3. *Mark the variety of her new relations.* First to her husband, then to her children, then to her servants. She is to discharge each duty faithfully, so as to avoid the reproach of the adversary.

II. THE REASON WHY SUCH COUNSEL IS GIVEN. "Give no occasion for reproach to the adversary; for already some have been turned away after Satan." 1. *The adversary is not necessarily the devil,* nor any particular individual, but that collective society around the Church which is always watchful for the halting of God's servants. For good cause or bad the reproaches will come, but they ought not to be justified by the injurious, or frivolous, or licentious conduct of professors. 2. *Mischief of this sort had already accrued to the cause of Christ.* Some widows had given evidence of the idle, wanton, worldly behaviour already condemned, showing a distinct swerve toward the adversary of souls and the accuser of the brethren. "Christ was the true Spouse; Satan the seducer."—T. C.

Ver. 16.—*Further directions as to the support of widows.* There is here a return to the subject of private beneficence.

I. THE DUTY OF CHRISTIAN WOMEN TO SUPPORT THEIR WIDOWED RELATIVES. "If any woman that believes hath widows, let support be given to them." *The allusion is probably to the younger widows, whose future would be very uncertain till, at least, they should marry.* The apostle had already provided for the case of aged widows. It was the plain duty of relatives to watch over the welfare of the younger women, who might be sisters, sisters-in-law, or nieces. The apostle founds the duty upon the principle that the gospel has not superseded, but rather strengthened, the claims of kinship.

II. REASONS FOR THE DISCHARGE OF THIS PRIVATE DUTY. "And let not the Church be burdened, that it may relieve those that are widows indeed." 1. *It would burden the Church greatly to increase the number of the pensioners on its generosity.* 2. *The exercise of private beneficence would allow a fuller provision to be made for those aged widows who were really friendless, homeless, and destitute.*—T. C.

Vers. 17, 18.—*Directions respecting the honour due to the elders of the Church.* "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially those who labour in the Word and doctrine."

I. THE CLASS OF PERSONS HERE REFERRED TO. 1. *It is evident that the apostle knew of no officers in the Church at Ephesus but these elders, with the deacons.* 2. *Their principal duty was government.* It was at least the prominent element in their calling. 3. *The passage suggests that, while all the elders governed, all did not labour in the Word and doctrine.* Each Church in that day had its band of elders at its head, but the teaching function was not universal, though by-and-by it assumed greater prominence and commanded greater distinction and respect.

II. THE HONOUR DUE TO ELDERS. They were to be counted worthy of double honour; that is, they were to be liberally provided for by the Church, as a special mode of showing respect to their office.

III. THE GROUND FOR THIS INJUNCTION. "For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle an ox while treading out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his hire." These two sayings, one contained in Scripture (Deut. xxv. 4), the other a proverbial saying used by our Lord himself (Luke x. 7), affords an argument for the support of Christian labourers. 1. *This shows that both the Law and the gospel sanction the due support of the ministry.* 2. *It shows that the minister's support is a matter of right, and not of compassion or kindness.* The animals that laboured had a right to the fruit of their labours.—T. C.

Ver. 19.—*Directions as to accusations against elders.* "Against an elder receive not an accusation, except it be upon two or three witnesses."

I. ELDERS MAY BE EXPOSED TO SUCH ACCUSATIONS BY THEIR VERY ZEAL AND FAITHFULNESS. 1. *Their duty being to convince the gainsayers and to reprove the faults of men,* they would be exposed to the risk of false accusation. Good ministers would be oftener accused if their accusers could but find judges willing to receive their charges. 2. *It is the interest of the Church of Christ to maintain the reputation of its ministers unchallenged.* It involves a sort of scandal for them to be accused at all, even though they should afterwards be cleared.

II. THE COURSE RECOMMENDED IN CASES OF THIS SORT. 1. *It diminishes the chances of such charges being made, that the testimony of a single malicious witness will not suffice to have an accusation even formally considered.* 2. *It would be a serious discouragement to a good minister for such charges to be entertained upon partial or defective evidence.* 3. *The deference due to the position of a man chosen by the Church as its pastor demanded a wise caution in the reception of charges against him.* 4. *Yet it was the duty of Timothy to make an investigation supported by adequate evidence.* There is nothing in the minister's position to exempt him from a just inquiry and its due consequences.—T. C.

Ver. 20.—*The manner of public rebuke.* The apostle refers here, not to offending elders, but to members of the Church generally, as we justly infer from the change of number. It is the elder in the one case; it is "those who sin" in the other.

I. THE PUBLICITY OF REBUKE. "Those that sin rebuke before all." 1. *The class referred to consists not of those merely overtaken in a fault* (Gal. vi. 1), but, as the tense of the word signifies, persons given to sinning. Thus great consideration and caution are to be exercised. The casual transgressor might be dealt with privately, and would not need further dealing on his exhibiting evidence of repentance. 2. *It was to be merely rebuke, not exclusion from the Church.* If the rebuke was unheeded, the extreme sentence would follow. 3. *The rebuke was to be public.* (1) The transgression may have been very public, to the scandal of religion; (2) the publicity would involve the full disclosure of the sin, and involve shame.

II. THE DESIGN OF PUBLIC REBUKE. "In order that the rest also may fear." Such a discipline would have a deterrent influence upon others. The strictness of the law would not be without effects upon conscience.—T. C.

Ver. 21.—*A solemn charge to Timothy to be conscientiously impartial in these cases.*

I. THE SOLEMNITY OF THE CHARGE. "I solemnly charge thee before God, and Jesus Christ, and the elect angels." 1. *Timothy, who is exhorted to faithfulness in judgment, is himself brought face to face with his Lord and Judge, who will appear along with the elect angels as assessors or executors of the Divine commands.* (1) God is omniscient and he is righteous, for with him is no respect of persons, and Timothy was a minister in the house of God, answerable for his discharge of all ecclesiastical duty. (2) Christ is likewise omniscient as well as righteous, Head of the Church and Judge of the quick and the dead, before whose judgment-seat all must stand. (3) "The elect angels." (a) These, who left not their first estate, but have been preserved in their integrity by Christ, who is the Head both of angels and of men, are the ministers and attendants of God. (b) There is nothing here to warrant the worship of angels, because they are not here regarded as judges, but as witnesses; neither are they sworn by nor appealed to by the apostle. The heavens and the earth are often summoned as witnesses in the same sense. 2. *This high appeal was designed to elevate the mind of Timothy above all sinister motives, and secure him against the dangers of a timid compliance with evil.*

II. THE SUBSTANCE OF THE CHARGE. "That thou keep these things without prejudging, doing nothing by partiality." He refers to the judicial inquiries respecting elders and members of the Church. 1. *There was to be an absence of prejudice.* There must be no prejudging a case before it is heard, under the influence of party feeling. Timothy must calmly hearken to the case presented by both sides, and weigh the evidence without haste or favour to either side. 2. *There was to be an absence of all partiality.* "Doing nothing by partiality." There must be no leaning to one side more than another. The scales of justice must be held evenly in Church affairs. Elders and members were alike to be judged with all fairness.—T. C.

Ver. 22.—*A caution against hasty induction of ministers.* If such judicial inquiries are to be avoided, there ought to be great care in the original appointment of ministers.

I. THERE MUST BE DUE CARE IN ORDAINING RIGHT PERSONS TO THE MINISTRY. "Lay hands on no one hastily." 1. *This does not refer to the practice of receiving offenders back into the Church by the imposition of the bishop's hands.* No such practice can be identified with the apostolic age, or with that immediately succeeding it. 2. *It refers, as the usage of the pastoral Epistles suggests, to "the laying on of hands in ordination."* (1) Saul and Barnabas were thus designated to their missionary tour (Acts xiii. 1). Timothy was thus ordained by the hands of the presbytery. It was the solemn recognition by the Church of the call which the minister-elect had received from on high. (2) Timothy was to guard against the possibility of rash appointments to the ministry by a due inquiry beforehand into the spiritual character and pastoral qualifications of the candidates for office. The glory of God, the salvation of man, the honour of religion, were all involved in such appointments.

II. THE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES OF SLACKNESS IN THE DISCHARGE OF SUCH A DUTY. "Neither participate in other men's sins." Timothy would "adopt the sins he overlooked" if he did not rightly distinguish between the worthy and the unworthy.

III. THE NECESSITY OF PERFECT PURITY ON TIMOTHY'S OWN PART. "Keep thyself pure." He must be pure who is called to judge others. There must be no shadow of

evil attaching to his character or conduct. Any impurity of character would utterly destroy his influence, and silence his rebukes of others.—T. C.

Ver. 23.—*Direction to Timothy to be careful of his health.* “No longer drink water, but use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake and thy frequent ailments.”

I. THE APOSTLE LENDS NO ENCOURAGEMENT TO AN ASCETIC ATTITUDE TOWARD MEATS OR DRINKS. The Essenes abstained altogether from wine, and as there was a close connection between Ephesus and Alexandria, where such views were held by a small section of Jews, it is not improbable that such views may have reached Ephesus. There was no harm in Timothy abstaining from wine, as a protest against excess in wine, but rather something highly praiseworthy. It was not through any deference to Essene asceticism, but through such a consideration as is here suggested, that Timothy was an habitual water-drinker.

II. THE APOSTLE HAS EXCLUSIVE REGARD TO TIMOTHY’S HEALTH. The use of wine was regarded in its purely medicinal aspect, and not as a mere pleasant beverage. Timothy was engaged in a service that demanded the fullest exhibition of all mental and bodily hardihood, as well as an iron endurance of disappointment and opposition. Under such influences, he would become depressed with effects most prejudicial to his health. The counsel shows the deep interest of the apostle in the young evangelist’s comfort and welfare.—T. C.

Vers. 24, 25.—*Final directions to Timothy respecting his attitude toward the sins and sinful works of men.* I. A CAUTION AGAINST HIS BEING TOO PRECIPITATE IN ABSOLVING MEN FROM CENSURE.

“The sins of some men are manifest, going before to judgment; with some again, they follow after.” The judgment is God’s, without excluding man’s. 1. *One class of sins is public and open.* They reach the Judge before the man himself who commits them. The sins are notorious. Timothy will have no excuse for absolving such persons. 2. *Another class of sins is not so manifest.* Unknown for the time to all but the all-seeing eye of God, yet going forward notwithstanding to the final judgment, where nothing can be hid. The judgment of man may have meanwhile absolved such a sinner, but the mournful secret comes out after all.

II. A CAUTION AGAINST BEING TOO PRECIPITATE IN HIS CENSURES. “In like manner also the works that are good are manifest, and those that are otherwise cannot be hid.” Some are open witnesses, others are secret witnesses; but there can be no effectual suppression of their testimony. God will bring works of all kinds into light. But it is the duty of Timothy and ministers in general to use due diligence to have the truth brought to light respecting such works. Therefore Timothy was not to be rash in condemning where hidden worth had not disclosed itself sufficiently to his eye. The good tree would by-and-by justify itself by its fruits.—T. C.

Ver. 1.—*Reverence for age.* “Rebuke not an elder.” Comprehensive indeed is Scripture. Its virtue is no vague generality, but is definite and distinct. It is this which makes the Bible a daily portion. There is ever in it some special counsel and comfort. With the cross for a centre, all the precious jewels of truth are set in their places around it. For each relationship of life there are separate behests of duty, and he must read in vain who does not feel that it was written for him. With this light none need go astray; and if they do, it is because they love the darkness rather than the light.

I. THERE IS TO BE REVERENCE FOR AGE. We are to entreat the elder rather than to rebuke them. Scolding is often mistaken for fidelity; and there is a scolding preaching which holds up mistake and error to scorn rather than to pity. The Bible reverences age. The elder, if he be here, must have seen and known terrible troubles and fierce temptations. His bark has been in many seas. His sword has been almost shivered in many fights. His countenance tells of tears and tribulations. He has known defeat as well as victory. Rebuke him not. With the soft down of youth on your cheek, deal reverently with the grey-headed men. If evil seems to be getting the mastery, and the lingering angels are about to leave, entreat age by the memories of the past and the great hopes of the reward so nigh at hand.

II. THERE IS TO BE FELLOWSHIP WITH YOUTH. Be a son to the aged, but a brother

to the young. "And the younger men as brethren;" not as a proud priest sent to rule them and to shrieve them, but as one who has the passions and the hopes, the duties and the dangers, of a brother.—W. M. S.

Ver. 2.—*What women should be.* "The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity." Full of the power which comes from feminine pity. Full of motherly experiences about children. Full of daily care and the diaconate of serving the home-tables. Full of a great heart-love that would make a roof-tree for all, as a hen that gathereth her chickens under her wings. Timothy will yet learn in the Church work the value of a mother in Israel. 1. *Mothers were our first pastors.* 2. *Mothers were our earliest examples.* "The younger as sisters, with all purity." Beautiful is the holy grace of purity, and sensitive is the girl-heart to the loveliness of true virtue! Put them not into confessionals to suggest sins that they never knew, and deprave the nature under the pretence of absolving it.—W. M. S.

Ver. 3.—*Sympathy with widows.* "Honour widows." Let them have a special place in reverent care and common prayer, as they have a lot which is so isolated and so hard—a battle so keen and terrible, and as they find that the slender means are so soon spent. The lonely hours are full of pictures of the past: as wives they were the first to be thought of and provided for—the best was for them, the first place at the table and in the heart was theirs; so honour them, for they are sensitive to slight and indifference. Let the Church counteract the neglect of the world.

I. THE SPIRIT OF CHILDREN. If they have children, or, as sometimes happens, nephews—or sister's children—who lost *their* mother in life's dawn of morning, let them show piety at home—the piety of gratitude, the piety of help, the piety of reverence, the piety of requital. How large a word "piety" is! An ungrateful child, who never thinks on a parent's past self-denial in its education, a parent's watchfulness in times of weakness and sickness, a parent's interest in its pleasures and counsels as to its companionships, and a parent's long interest in all that relates to mind and heart,—is an impious child. Quick, clever, it may be flattered by new friends, and favoured by fortune with pleasant looks, and yet be selfish, indifferent, and forgetful.

II. THE REQUITAL TO BE GIVEN. Remember, young friends, that you have to *requite* your parents, not with the patronage of commercial payment when you succeed, but with the requital of the tender inquiry, the watchful love, the jealous service, the gracious respect.—W. M. S.

Ver. 4.—*What pleases God.* "For that is good and acceptable before God." He looks not merely on the great heroisms of confessors and martyrs, but on the sublime simplicities even of a child's character.

I. AVOID MISTAKES IN CHILD TRAINING AND TEACHING. I am one of those who think that it is a monstrous mistake to fill their hymns with rich rhapsodies about heaven, about wanting to be angels, and about superior emotions, when the very things next to them are seldom referred to at all. To the father the son must always be a boy, and the daughter to the mother a girl; so that all *manner*, even which is high-flown and independent, or brusque and irreverent, is painful, and brings tears to the hearts of parents.

II. REMEMBER THE RELIGIOUSNESS OF HOME-LIFE. "Piety at home," by which is not meant precocity of religious opinion, or plentifulness of religious phraseology, but the piety of respect, attention, obedience, requital, and reverence. This is "good and acceptable before God."—W. M. S.

Ver. 5.—*Desolateness.* "Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate." Here the apostle returns to widows again, showing that he has them very much in his mind.

I. DESOLATE. That is the revealing word. "Desolate." She may be poor and desolate, or she may be competent and desolate, or she may be rich and desolate—all surrounding things making her feel more the loss of that which *is not*; all framing "emptiness;" all but reminders of the presence which gave value to them all.

II. DESOLATE; FOR THE LIFE-PATH IS AND MUST BE TRODDEN ALONE. The wakeful hours find her alone; the hours when pain and weariness come to her find her alone;

for the difficult problem of thought has none to aid in its solution now—she is alone. So desolate; for other fellowships are not *for life*; they only help to vary her life. Desolate; for none can quite understand her care and grief, and think that she will soon put *them* off with the weeds and crape.—W. M. S.

Ver. 5.—*Confidence in the Father.* “Trusteth in God.” Let Timothy remember that in *her* case experience has ratified truth. She will need no elaborate arguments for the truth, because—

I. SHE HAS THE EVIDENTIAL PROOF WITHIN. Did she not in the dark hours fling her arms around her Father's neck; did she not tell *him* that she would fear *no* want, though she felt such change? Did not *that* trust—simple trust—do her more good than all human words, all kindly letters, all change of place and scene? Others wondered at her, rising up in her poor strength to arrange, to order, to readjust life to means and circumstances, to do her best for the little flock that she was shepherdess to in the wilderness.

II. SHE HAS THE FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER. Yes, O man of the world, O scorner of truth, O soft-spoken atheist, she prays! Makes the air quiver, you say. Hears the echo of her own cry, you say. Bends before an empty throne, you say. It may be *you* have never felt to need God as she needs him now. Her need is an instinct and an argument; for somehow in this world there is a Divine revealing, call it what you like, that satisfies the desire of every living thing. And *she* has prayed, and the secret of the Lord has been made known; and that it is no empty experience, is now to be proven in this way.

III. SHE REVEALS ITS POWER BY HER PERSEVERANCE IN IT. She “*continueth* in prayers and supplications night and day.” Then there must be relief. The burden must be lighter, the load must be easier, the vision must be clearer. None of us *continue* in that which mocks us. The invisible world is as *real* as the visible one. We know when there is a whisper within us and an arm around us, and so does she. Surely you would not rob her of her only wealth—her *trust*. But you cannot. “Night and day.” Mark that. She finds in the night an image of her grief. She finds in the night *silence*. The children, if any, are asleep. She whose tears have watered her couch, whose hand has reached forth into the empty space, whose every movement would once have awakened solicitude, as of pain, or weariness, or sleeplessness, is now alone. But *not alone*; for the lips move and a great cry goes up: “O God, be not far from me! Listen to the voice of my cry, my King and my God. My heart within me is desolate. Hear me out of thy habitation, thou Father of the fatherless, thou Judge of the widow. I mourn in my complaint and make a noise. Oh, when wilt thou come to me?” And God does come; and it may help Timothy to know that this gospel which he has to preach is a Divine living seed, bearing its harvests in the hearts and homes of the elders and of the widows. We shall see in our next exposition that St. Paul knows that there are worldly hearts to whom affliction brings no gracious fruit; and if there be a sight on earth more appalling than another, it is the frivolous widow whose very mourning is a pride and a study, whose manner is that of a pleasure-seeker, and whose heart is unaffected by the reverences of the memories of love and death. It is very evident that the gospel which Timothy was to teach and preach was no mere creed, no mere perfect ritual or ceremonial, but a religion human and Divine, a religion that *anticipates* the changes and sorrows and dangers of every individual life. This Book is a *vademecum*. Here we go for all the medicines of relief and hope that our poor humanity needs. We shall never outgrow the Book. Its leaves are still for the healing of the nations, and it makes life calm, restful, and beautiful. How comes it that *we* have known the sweetest angels in such guises as these afflictions and bereavements bring? Yet so it is. Where shall we go? Oh, life has many roads; banditti lurk here and there, and there are swollen rivers to be forded, and dangerous passes to be entered. How shall we go? With this rod and staff we may go anywhere. If we take a fable, let it be the ancient *stone*: if you look therein, strange transformations take place—you ask me *what I see*? Now a sword; now a fountain; now a simple loaf of bread; now a touchstone of evil and of good; now a rock high above the waters; now a pilot on a dangerous sea; now a pillar rising on the plain of time; now a harp from which sweetest music breathes; now a pillow—a simple pillow. Cowper puts aside his own

'Task' and takes God's Testament; so will we. On these promises of God we will fall asleep.—W. M. S.

Ver. 6.—*Death in life.* "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." Christianity purifies and harmonizes the whole nature of man, and assimilates whatever is pure in humanity to the kingdom of God. It does not destroy pure earthly joys; nay, rather it plants many flowers by the wayside of life. But pleasure is often perverted by man, and in that age it had become so associated with what was coarse and carnal, that the very word "pleasure" became in the gospel a synonym for sin. We have here death in the midst of life—"that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth"—or death and life side by side.

I. THE IMMOBILITY WHICH CHARACTERIZES THE DEAD BODY CHARACTERIZES THE DEAD SOUL. There is no movement of thought towards God; no feet swift to do his will; no heart that beats in sympathy with his Law. Instinct is alive; but the brightness of the eye, and the music of the voice, and the activities of life, are like flowers upon graves.

II. THE INSENSIBILITY OF THE DEAD BODY CHARACTERIZES THE DEAD SOUL. All around there may be signs of outward life. As the body lies in the churchyard, the murmuring river flows by its banks, the birds make their summer music in the trees, and men, women, and children stay to rest, and to read the inscriptions on the graves; but to all these things the sleepers in the tombs are insensible. So the dead soul is insensible to the august realities of religion, to the voices of God, and to the visions of the great day.

III. THE CORRUPTION OF THE DEAD BODY CHARACTERIZES THE DEAD SOUL. This is the dread thought in connection with death, that we must bury it out of sight. When decay commences, corruption begins; and he, who knows all that is in man, tells us that out of the sepulchre of the unrenewed heart of man come evil desires, murders, and adulteries. "They that sow to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption." These aspects of the case show us that, as there are graveyards in the crowded cities with all their busy life, so in the unrenewed heart of man there is death in the midst of life.—W. M. S.

Ver. 8.—*Care for the home.* "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for thoe of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." The gospel does not leave us with any loose ideas of responsibility. There is often a universal sentiment of goodness which finds no particular application.

I. MAN HAS "HIS OWN." He is to care for his own soul. He is accountable for his own influence. He is the father of his own family, and, up to a certain age, his will is their law. He is to provide for his own; his thought and skill and care are all to be laid upon the altar of the household. It is sad to see men sometimes flattered by the world, and welcomed to every hearth, who yet leave "their own" slighted and neglected at home. The gospel says that the husband is the head of the wife; and the gospel evidently understands the design of God, that man should be the hard worker and bread-winner of life.

II. HE HAS A FAITH TO KEEP. What is meant here by denying the faith, and being worse than an infidel? Surely this, that the faith is meant to make us Christ-like; one with him who pleased not himself, who ministered to others, and who revealed to us that great law of love by which every Christian life must be inspired. The word "infidel" has often been used to represent mere sceptical unbelief. It really means "wanting in faith;" and the man who, whatever he professes, does not live out the spirit of the gospel (which sanctifies, above all things earthly, the marriage life, and makes it the image of the union betwixt Christ and his Church), that man is worse than an infidel, if by infidel we mean a man who intellectually has not accepted the Christian faith.—W. M. S.

Ver. 13.—*The busybody life.* "And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not." Indolence is the parent of all sins, because, with evil so active in the world, some of its emissaries are sure to be wanting house-room in our hearts.

I. WE MAY LEARN TO BE IDLE. There is no life so undignified as that which is busy in trifles, which has learned to enjoy listless hours. For the wandering thought produces the wandering life. "Wandering about from house to house;" and, having nothing else to build with, too often build aerial structures of untruths and half-truths.

II. NOT ONLY IDLE, BUT TATTLERS. The harm that has been worked in this world by busybodies cannot be over-estimated. It is easy to send an arrow into the air, but not to gather it up again. It is easy to poison the river of good reputation, but we cannot re-purify the stream. It is easy to pluck the flower of a good man's fame, but we cannot restore its beauty. "Speaking things which they ought not." How few really make "I ought" govern their lives! Custom and convenience and pleasantness too often constrain our speech. People like to startle others, to give the shock of a new sensation, to amuse them, to please them. And, alas! it is too true that tattlers and busybodies know how to gratify those they visit. St. Paul thinks in this next verse (14) that marriage and care of children and housewifery are good things (which the ascetic Roman Church seems not to think), and that women so occupied give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.—W. M. S.

Ver. 24.—*Sins that go before.* "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after." Primarily, these words refer to the ministry. Never act suddenly. You may be deceived, and lay hands on unfit men, damaging the Church and dishonouring God. Manner may deceive. Latent sins may slumber beneath specious appearances. Some sins blossom at once, and evil is unveiled. At times the poisonous springs send forth their deleterious waters at once. Sometimes they are like hidden watercourses flowing beneath the surface soil, and appearing in unexpected places. Moral government always exists, but diversity characterizes the methods of God. Justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne. Sometimes Cain and Ananias are punished at once; the one is outlawed, the other dies. But Herod and Pilate waited for a revealing day. Subject—*Sins that go before.* They have outriders. As with a trumpet-peal attention is called to their advent. We see the evil-doers; vile in countenance, shambling in gait, dishonoured in mien. These sins are revealed. We mark lost delicacy, honour, purity, peace, principle, reputation, joy!

I. THIS IS SPECIAL OR EXCEPTIONAL. "Some men's sins." Do not, in observing them, draw an argument for the necessary goodness of others. The openness of some judgments does not give, necessarily, fair fame to others. In the most decorous life there may be secret sins. The slumbering fire may be in the hold of the stately ship. The hidden vulture may be waiting for the carrion of the soul. But here there is judgment. We look around, we see it. Our newspapers, our neighbourhoods say, "Behold the hand of God here." Faith is departed; hope is blighted; beauty is destroyed; the dark outriders are here.

II. THIS IS A SPECTACLE TO MEN. "They are open beforehand," and not made manifest merely in the sense of being sins, but their judgment is with them. For there are two ideas—you may see a sin to be a sin, but you need not have its judgment open. But the translation here requires that we should understand that the judgment is open, as well as the sin. You see not only men's corruption, but their misery; not only their guilt, but their shame. A child might see a poison berry, and know that it is such; or see a snake, and be told it has a sting; but how clear the judgment if, under the one tree, a little child lay dead; and beside the serpent a man was struggling in throes of agony!

III. THEY ARE OPEN BEFOREHAND. That implies they are hints in this world (where there is a place for repentance) of troubles yet to come. They do not exhaust judgment; they are premonitions of it. The light of mercy plays all around even the paths of judgment here; for the Saviour of men is able to deliver from every prison-house. The beforehand judgment may be a merciful thing, but let no man deal lightly with it. The gathering clouds presage the fury of the storm; the pattering drops herald the hail and rain; the reddening light of the volcano tells of the desolating lava. "Some men's sins are open beforehand."—W. M. S.

Ver. 24.—*Sins that follow after.* "Some men they follow after." Here is a revealed

fact with no comment upon it, but it is very terrible. A smooth comfortable life, and yet a life of respectable sin! No blame, no opprobrium, no ostracism from society. Men deceive themselves. They go into the streets of their Nineveh, but no prophet reproves them. The waters are rising, but no Noah warns them; all is placid and full of repose.

I. THE CONNECTION BETWEEN A MAN AND HIS SINS. "And some *men* they follow after." Our sins are like us; they reflect our faces; they are mirrors which will one day show us ourselves; they follow after us by a moral individuality; they will each fly to their own centre. Our sins are not resolvable into some generic whole as the sin of man. The blight in the summer-time is not so disastrous in defacing beauty, the locusts of the East are not so devastating in their all-devouring flight, as are our troops of sins. *They* follow after us, and blight our immortality.

II. THE CONNECTION BETWEEN SHAME AND SIN. "They follow after." That is the reason we are not ashamed of them. Shame for sin is not sorrow for sin. The Hindoo is only ashamed when he is discovered. That is not grief at sin: it is horror at being found out. Sins that follow after are not much thought about. The world has given us *carte blanche* if we preserve our position in society. What men shrink from is exposure and shame. If all sins were revealed, who could bear it? If the earth were a moral mirror, who could walk upon it? But detection surely comes in God's way—in God's great day when he shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ.—W. M. S.

Vers. 1—16.—*Dealing with certain classes in the Church.* I. BEHAVIOUR OF TIMOTHY TOWARD THE ELDER AND YOUNGER CHURCH MEMBERS OF BOTH SEXES. "Rebuke not an elder, but exhort him as a father; the younger men as brethren: the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, in all purity." A minister has to deal with people differing in age and sex. If he is a young minister like Timothy, he has a difficult part to act. It may happen that one who is very much his elder is guilty of an offence. How is he to conduct himself toward him? He is not to rebuke him sharply, as the word means, being different from what is employed in 2 Tim. iv. 2, where authority is given to rebuke. Along with the authority that belongs to his office, there is to be such respect as is due by a child to a father. Entreaty will therefore not be separated from the presentation of duty. If it is younger men that offend, there is not to be wanting the respect that is due to brethren. If it is the elder women who are faulty, they are to be addressed as mothers. "Plead with your mother, plead" (Hos. ii. 2). If it is the younger women who have to be dealt with, there is to be sisterly regard, without the slightest departure from propriety.

II. THE CHURCH ROLL OF WIDOWS. "Honour widows that are widows indeed." The honour requires to be restricted, to harmonize with the definition of them that are widows indeed. It comes to be their being placed (ver. 9) on the special roll of Church widows. Let the honour not be lowered by being too widely extended; let it be confined to them that are really deserving. 1. *Exclusion of those who have claims on children or grandchildren.* "But if any widow hath children or grandchildren, let them learn first to show piety towards their own family, and to requite their parents: for this is acceptable in the sight of God." The Church is not to be charged with the care of widows who have children or grandchildren able to care for them. Upon them the duty falls, before falling upon the Church. This is only how a sacred regard for parents should show itself. It is a duty founded on natural justice, viz. requital for services rendered to them by parents. And it cannot but be pleasing to God, who has laid the foundations of it in nature, and who is represented by the parents, so that what is rendered to them is regarded as rendered to him. 2. *Qualification of being desolate.* "Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate." The widow indeed is defined as desolate or left alone, i.e. who, needing to be cared for, has none of her own to care for her. (1) *Religion of her position.* "Hath her hope set on God, and continueth in supplication and prayers night and day." Having no expectation from any earthly helper, she hath her hope set on God, i.e. primarily for earthly blessings that she needs. She is also by her destitution led to dwell more upon the future than upon the present. She is also by her loneliness led to be much with God. She addresses God in connection with her own requirements, but she does not forget the requirements of others, for her prayers extend from day into the night, from night into the day. Thus is her

position made helpful to her religious life. (2) *Irreligion of a desolate position.* "But she that giveth herself to pleasure is dead while she liveth." In the absence of children or grandchildren that can care for her, the temptation is, where a woman has not a lawful way of making a living, to seek a living by giving herself up to unlawful pleasure. Such a one necessarily loses any Christian status that she had entitling her to be cared for by the Church. It can be said of her more radically, that she makes a contradiction of her life. While living, she is making of herself moral rottenness. As in this state she is a fit object for Christian sympathy. And, if she comes to see herself to be in this state, there is hope for her from him who hath said, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." But that is the true reading of her state upon which all effort after her salvation must proceed, "She is dead while she liveth." *Reason for insisting on the qualification.* "These things also command, that they may be without reproach." The requirement was to be laid authoritatively upon the Church, in the interest of the widows themselves. There was their character as a *class* to be protected. Let none be admitted into their number who were not fit subjects for Church support. *General principle by which this case is ruled.* "But if any provideth not for his own, and specially his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever." The law for the believer is that he is to provide, more widely, for his own and, less widely, for those who belong to the family. He who does not observe this is virtually unchurching himself. He is falling below the unbeliever, who is taught by nature, or by his religion which is wrong on so many points, to do as much. With regard to caring for parents, Plutarch says that all men, though some may think otherwise, say that nature and the law of nature requires that parents should have the highest honour next the gods; that men can do nothing more acceptable to the gods than by readily heaping favours upon their parents; and that nothing is a greater evidence of atheism or impiety than to despise them. On the other hand, there is a clear obligation also founded in nature for parents to provide for their children while they are in a state of dependence. This obligation is violated by the man who spends on his own lusts what should be spent on his family. 3. *Qualification of age.* "Let none be enrolled as a widow under threescore years old." In accordance with what has gone before, we are to think of a roll of widows supported by the Church, for which the minimum requirement of age is here laid down as sixty. 4. *Qualification of regularity of marriage.* "Having been the wife of one man." It is difficult to see how such second marriage as is sanctioned in ver. 14 should exclude from the roll. It is better, therefore, to think of some irregularity, such as unlawful divorce from a first husband. 5. *Qualification of serviceableness.* "Well reported of for good works; if she hath brought up children, if she hath used hospitality to strangers, if she hath washed the saints' feet, if she hath relieved the afflicted, if she hath diligently followed every good work." Some of the works are mentioned for which she is to be well reported of. First, what she has done for *children*, either her own or orphans. To bring up children well implies great self-denial and power of management, and is to do a great service to the Church. Secondly, what she has done for *strangers*. We are to think of their being entertained for the Church. If they were not Christians, they would be sent away with a good impression of Christianity. Thirdly, what she has done for the *saints*. The washing of the feet is common in the East. We need not wonder at stress being laid on her performing a humble service. Humble services are to be performed toward the members of the Christian circle, for the sake of Christ and after the example of Christ. Fourthly, what she has done for the *afflicted*, or hard pressed in any way. We are to think of relief being afforded by a visit of sympathy, a word of encouragement, the undertaking of work as well as the bestowal of charity. It is added generally, "If she hath diligently followed every good work." It is evident that one who had been so serviceable to the Church would, in case of her destitution, have a claim to be supported by the Church. It can easily be seen, too, how, with such qualifications, she would be expected, in lieu of the support rendered to her, to render such service to the Church as was in her power. Thus the roll of Church widows would have the honourable character of a roll of Church workers. And we can think of widows being admitted upon the roll who did not need Church support, but wanted to do Church work. And there seems to have been, in accordance with this, in the early Church, an order of *presbytery widows*, who, under the sanctions of the Church, attended to the

sick and instructed and advised the younger members of their sex. 6. *Exclusion of younger widows.* "But younger widows refuse." They were not to have the honour of being put upon the roll, though, in case of destitution, not beyond Christian help. (1) *Their changeableness.* "For when they have waxed wanton against Christ, they desire to marry; having condemnation, because they have rejected their first faith." Under the influence of grief, their first thought might be to devote themselves to Christian service, and with that view to apply to be admitted on the roll of Church widows. But there would be danger of their departing from that idea of their life. The fact of their desiring to marry being regarded as a waxing wanton against Christ implies that the being admitted to the roll was a coming under some obligation to continue in widowhood for the sake of such services as they could render. Their being taken off the roll implies the condemnation of their rejecting their first faith, *i.e.* departing from the idea which, at the first, with sacred feelings, they had adopted for their future earthly life. (2) *Their triviality.* "And withal they learn also to be idle, going about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not." This was a second danger, while remaining in widowhood and having their names on the roll, their departing from the *seriousness* of the life which they had chosen. There is a way of going about from house to house which is simply a wasting of time. This leads to a habit of gossiping, and a habit of intermeddling. Things are said which ought not to be said—as being coloured and mischievous in their consequences. (3) *His advice to them confirmed by experience.* "I desire therefore that the younger widows marry, bear children, rule the household, give none occasion to the adversary for reviling; for already some are turned after Satan." In view of the dangers mentioned, the apostle appoints, for the younger widows, marriage and its duties. That would take away occasion for reviling. Some who had given themselves to Christ as presbyter-widows were turned after Satan, *i.e.* married, or given up to idle habits. (4) *Such as needed to be relieved.* "If any woman that believeth hath widows, let her relieve them, and let not the Church be burdened; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed." This touches the former point of support. If they married, then they did not need Church support. But what was to be done with lonely and destitute young widows who remained unmarried? The apostle lays the burden of their support upon a believing female relative (on the supposition that there was such). She is to undertake the burden, rather than that the Church should be burdened. It is implied that, in the event of there being no one to undertake the burden, the Church is to step in and act the part of the relative, without, however, placing her meantime upon the honourable roll of Church widows.—R. F.

Vers. 17—25.—*The presbyterate.* I. HONOUR DUE TO ELDERS. "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially those who labour in the word and in teaching." As associated with Paul, Timothy was to be classed as an extraordinary office-bearer in the Church. He had the *organizing* of the Ephesian Church, but it was intended that the rule should permanently reside in a class of ordinary office-bearers who are here called elders. The fact is plainly stated that elders were ordained by the apostles in every Church (Acts xiv. 23). It appears that the organization of a Church was regarded as defective without the appointment of elders (Titus i. 5). In the Church of Ephesus, as in all other Churches that we read of, there was a *plurality* of elders. All the elders are regarded as ruling or presiding, *i.e.* over the brethren who composed the Church. To elders it belongs to administer the laws which Christ has laid down for the government of his Church, and to take the general superintendence of the affairs of the congregation over which they are placed. It is a rule in which good qualities may be evinced, such as fidelity, diligence, impartiality, affectionateness, a habit of dependence upon Divine grace. Elders as such are to be counted worthy of honour, but those that rule well are to be counted worthy of double honour, *i.e.* the honour of excellence in the discharge of their duties added to the honour belonging to their office. There are two classes of elders—those who merely rule, and those who, besides ruling, are charged with *the Word* and with *teaching*. It is an honour by itself to have to do with the Word, and especially with the teaching of it, *i.e.* to be teaching elders; but those who have not only the office but do well in it—suggested by the word "labour"—are to be counted worthy of double honour.

II. THEIR MAINTENANCE. "For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his hire." Under the honour to be done especially to the laborious teaching elder, is brought maintenance. This is enforced by a reference to Deut. xxv. 4. The Jewish law showed consideration for an animal that had to labour. The ox was not to be muzzled when, in Eastern fashion, treading out the corn. It was not to be prevented from enjoying the fruit of its labours. The application is given at some length in 1 Cor. ix., but it is simply brought out here by a proverb, which is also made use of by our Lord. The Christian teacher labours as really as the ox that treads out the corn. Not less than the ox he is to have the condition of labour, viz. maintenance. He is to have it not as a necessity, but on the principle that he is entitled to it as the reward of his labour.

III. THEIR JUST TREATMENT UNDER ACCUSATION. "Against an elder receive not an accusation, except at the mouth of two or three witnesses." There is reference to a well-known regulation of the Jewish law. It was especially to be observed in the case of honoured or doubly honoured elders. No weight was to be attached to unproved private complaints. "It might easily happen in a Church, so large and mixed as the Ephesian, that one or another, from wounded feelings of honour, from mere partisanship, or some selfish motive, would seek to injure a presbyter, and drag him down from his influential position; and against this the precept of the apostle was the best safeguard."

IV. DISCIPLINE IF SHOWN TO BE SINNING. "Them that sin reprove in the sight of all, that the rest also may be in fear." The apostle has been treating of elders; he is still treating of elders in ver. 22. If, then, ordinary weight is to be attached to the context in interpretation, the conclusion seems certain that public reproof was only enjoined in the case of sinning elders. We are to understand that the accusation against them has been substantiated by two or three witnesses, and that by continuing in sin they exhibit no signs of repentance. Let such be publicly reproved, that, if the publicity does not do them good, it may at least cause a wholesome fear to fall upon others of their class.

V. SOLEMN ADJURATION. "I charge thee in the sight of God, and Christ Jesus, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing by partiality." The *form* of the adjuration is remarkable for the proximity in which Christ Jesus stands to God. If we are led to think of God as being omniscient, we are as naturally led to think of Christ Jesus as being omniscient, i.e. Divine. The form of the adjuration is also remarkable for the bringing in of the elect angels, i.e. honoured to be the chosen objects of God's love. Their omniscience does not belong to them singly, but to their class, which is frequently represented as very numerous. As witnesses of what is now done on earth they will be present with their Lord on the day of judgment. The *matter* of the adjuration is the upholding of the presbyterate. Let none of the order be prejudged unfavourably; let none, through favour, be spared, if their sin is patent. We may learn from the solemnity of the adjuration, how highly the apostle valued the honour of the order.

VI. CARE IN APPOINTING TO THE ORDER. "Lay hands hastily on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure." The laying on of hands in ordination, which is clearly referred to here, is symbolic of the communication of spiritual gifts. We also learn from the language here, that it is equivalent to recognition on the part of those ordaining. They are accountable thus far, that if, through *hastiness*, they have admitted unworthy persons into the order, then they are partakers of their sins. As having to pronounce upon others, Timothy was to keep himself pure; his own conduct was to be above suspicion.

VII. TIMOTHY CAUTIONED. "Be no longer a drinker of water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." Paley makes a point of the want of connection. "The direction stands between two sentences, as wide from the subject as possible." He, however, puts more upon this than it will bear. There is a certain Epistolary negligence, but there is connection. It occurs to the apostle that the command to keep himself pure might be too strictly interpreted by Timothy. He was not to be regarded as enjoining the utmost abstinence on him. On the contrary, his opinion was that Timothy was abstinent beyond what his health demanded. He

was a drinker of water, *i.e.* accustomed to the exclusive use of water as a drink. Whatever his reasons for adopting this course, it was too rigorous for him. He needed a little wine for his stomach's sake and his often infirmities. This is not certainly to be construed into a licence for the unlimited use of wine. He is only recommended the use of a *little* wine. And the very reason which is given for its use is against its use where the same reason does not exist. It is only too obvious that alcohol is destructive to the stomach, and the fruitful cause of infirmities. It is destructive to the brain as well as to the stomach. "There is quite a marked type of mental degeneration which may result from continuous drinking during ten years without one instance of drunkenness. We have, as a statistical fact, that from fifteen to twenty per cent. of the actual insanity of the country is produced by alcohol." In the name of health, then, its use is to be feared; but, where health demands the use of wine, it is a sin not to use it. For the servant of the Lord must have his strength of body at a maximum for him.

VIII. A POINT TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE JUDGING OF MEN FOR OFFICE. "Some men's sins are evident, going before unto judgment; and some men also they follow after. In like manner also there are good works that are evident; and such as are otherwise cannot be hid." Present judging has a look forward to future judging. To future judgment all actions, bad and good, are regarded as going forward. But there is a difference, both in the case of bad actions and of good actions. Some men's sins are notorious; and, as heralds, go before them to judgment, proclaiming their condemnation. With regard to such, judging for office is an easy matter; but it is not so with others. "Their sins are first known after and by the judgment, not known beforehand like the first named. In regard to those whose character is not yet clear, circumspection in our judgment cannot be too strongly urged." The same difference applies to good works. Some are as clear as noonday; and therefore there can be no hesitation in regard to the doers of them. There are, however, other good works which are not thus clear; these cannot be hid longer than the judgment. In view of the discovery of good deeds at present unknown, we cannot be too circumspect in our judgment of men, lest by our hastiness we do injury to any.—R. F.

EXPOSITION.

CHAPTER VI.

Ver. 1.—*Are servants for servants as are, A.V.; the doctrine for his doctrine, A.V. Servants; literally, slaves.* That slaves formed a considerable portion of the first Christian Churches may be inferred from the frequency with which their duties are pressed upon them (see 1 Cor. vii. 21—24; xii. 13; Eph. vi. 5—8; Col. iii. 11, 22; 1 Pet. ii. 18 (*οἱ οἰκέται*); see also 1 Cor. i. 27—29). It must have been an unspeakable comfort to the poor slave, whose worldly condition was hopeless and often miserable, to secure his place as one of Christ's freemen, with the sure hope of attaining "the glorious liberty of the children of God." Under the yoke; *i.e.* "the yoke of bondage" (Gal. v. 1). Perhaps the phrase contains a touch of compassion for their state (comp. Acts xv. 10). How beautiful is the contrast suggested in Matt. xi. 29, 30! Masters (*δεσπότας*); the proper word in relation to *δοῦλος*. The doctrine (*ἡ διδασκαλία*); equivalent to "Christianity," as taught by the apostles and their successors (see the frequent use of the word in the pastoral Epistles, though

with different shades of meaning (Ch. i. 10; iv. 6, 13, 16; v. 17; 2 Tim. iii. 10; iv. 3; Titus i. 9; ii. 10, etc.). Blasphemed (compare the similar passage, Titus ii. 5, where *ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ* answers to *ἡ διδασκαλία* here). *Βλασφημεῖν* does not necessarily mean "blaspheme" in its restricted sense, but as often means "to speak evil of," "to defame," and the like. If Christian slaves withheld the honour and respect due to their masters, it would be as sure to bring reproach upon the Christian doctrine as if it taught insubordination and rebellion.

Ver. 2.—*Let them serve them the rather for rather do them service, A.V.; that partake of the benefit are believing and beloved for are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit, A.V. They that have believing masters.* The direction in the preceding verse applied to all slaves, though chiefly to what, as Alford says, was far the commonest case, that of those who had unbelieving masters. But now he adds a caution with regard to the Christian slave of a Christian master. There was a danger lest the feeling that slaves and masters are brothers in Christ should unduly interfere with the respect

which he owed him as his master. And so St. Paul addresses a word of special advice to such. Let them not despise them. Let not their spiritual equality with their masters lead them to underrate the worldly difference that separates them; or to think slightly of the authority of a master relatively to his slaves (comp. 2 Pet. ii. 10). But let them serve them the rather, because they that partake of the benefit are believing and beloved. There is a good deal of obscurity in this sentence, but it may be observed first that the grammatical rendering of the R.V. is clearly right, and that of the A.V. clearly wrong. "They that partake of the benefit" is beyond all doubt the subject, and not the predicate. Then the construction of the two sentences (this and the preceding one) makes it certain that the subject in this sentence (*of τῆς ἐνεργείας ἀντιλαμβανόμενοι*) are the same persons as the *δέσποται* in the preceding sentence, because it is predicated of them both that they are πιστοί, and of both that they are, in convertible terms, ἀγαπητοί and ἀδελφοί.¹ And this leads us, with nearly certainty, to the further conclusion that the *ἐνεργεία*, the *beneficium*, or "benefit," spoken of is that especial service—that service of love and good will running ahead of necessary duty, which the Christian slave gives to the Christian master; a sense which the very remarkable passage quoted by Alford from Seneca strikingly confirms.² The only remaining difficulty, then, is the meaning "partake of" ascribed to *ἀντιλαμβανόμενοι*. But this is scarcely a difficulty. It is true that in the only two other passages in the New Testament where this verb occurs, and in its frequent use in the LXX., it has the sense of "helping" (Luke i. 54; Acts xx. 35); but there is nothing strange in this. The verb in the middle voice means to "lay hold of." You may *lay hold of* for the purpose of helping, supporting, clinging to, laying claim to, holding in check, etc. (see Liddell and Scott). Here the masters *lay hold of* the benefit for the purpose of enjoying

it. There is possibly an indication in the word that the masters actively and willingly accept it—they stretch out their hand to take it. There does not seem to be any sense of reciprocity, as some think, in the use of *ἀντι*. The sense of the whole passage seems to be clearly, "Let not those who have believing masters think slightly of their authority because they are brethren; but let them do them extra service, beyond what they are obliged to do, for the very reason that those whom they will thus benefit are believing and beloved brethren." Teach (*δίδασκε*). Observe the connection of this word with the *ἡ διδασκαλία* of vers. 1, 3, and elsewhere.

Ver. 3.—*Teacheth for teach, A.V.; a different doctrine for otherwise, A.V.; consenteth for consent, A.V.; sound for wholesome, A.V. Teacheth a different doctrine* (*ἐτεροδιδασκαλεῖ*); see above, ch. i. 3, note. *Consenteth* (*προσέρχεται*); very common in the New Testament, in the literal sense of "coming to" or "approaching," but only here in the metaphorical sense of "assenting to." The steps seem to be, *first*, approaching a subject with the mind with a view of considering it; and *then* consenting to it—coming over to it. The term *προσέλκω*, a convert to Judaism, and the phrase from Irenæus ('Fragm.,' ii.), quoted by Ellicott, *ὅς τοῖς τῶν Ἰουδαίων δόγμασι προσέρχονται*, "They do not fall in with, or agree to, the doctrines of the Jews," sufficiently illustrate the usage of the word here. *Sound* (*ὀγιαννοῦσι*); see ch. i. 10, note. *Godliness* (*ἐνσεβεία*); see ch. ii. 2, note.

Ver. 4.—*Puffed up for proud, A.V.; questionings for questions, A.V.; disputes for strifes, A.V. He is puffed up* (*τετύφωται*); see ch. iii. 6, note. *Dotings* (*νοσῶν*); here only in the New Testament, but found occasionally in the LXX. Applied in classical Greek to the mind and body, "to be in an unsound state." Here it means "having a morbid love of" or "going mad about." In this morbid love of questionings and disputes of words, they lose sight of all wholesome words and all godly doctrine. *Questionings* (*ζητήσεις*); see ch. i. 6, note. It corresponds nearly to our word "controversies." *Disputes of words* (*λογομαχίας*); found only here. The verb *λογομαχέω* is used in 2 Tim. ii. 14. Would that the Church had always remembered St. Paul's pithy condemnation of unfruitful controversies about words! *Surmisings* (*ὑπόνοιαι*); only here in the New Testament. In classical Greek it means "suspicion," or any under-thought. The verb *ὑπονοέω* occurs three times in the Acts—"to deem, think, or suppose." Here the "surmisings" are those uncharitable insinuations in which angry controversialists indulge towards one another.

¹ Of the sixty-two times which *ἀγαπητός* is used in the New Testament, excluding those in which it is applied to Jesus Christ as God's beloved Son (ten times), it is applied *thrice* to the love of God to man, and *forty-nine* times to the love of brother to brother.

² "Quæritur a quibusdam an *beneficium* dare servus domino possit," and he resolves the inquiry by saying, "Quicquid est quod ex imperio sed ex voluntate præstat, *beneficium* est" (Seneca, 'De Beneficiis,' iii. 18). This similarity of thought is undoubtedly very strong evidence that St. Paul was acquainted with Seneca's writings.

Ver. 5.—*Wranglings for perverse disputings*, A.V. and T.R.; *corrupted in mind for of corrupt minds*, A.V.; *bereft for destitute*, A.V.; *godliness is a way of gain for gain is godliness*, A.V. *Wranglings* (διαπαράξεις, R.T.; παραδιάρξεις, T.R.). The R.T. has far the largest weight of authority in its favour (Ellicott). The substantive παρα-*ρῖς* in Polybius means "provocation," "collision," "friction," and the like. Hence διαπαράρῖς (which is only found here) means "continued wranglings." The substantive διάρῖς (English *diatribe*) means, among other things, a "discussion" or "argument." The addition of *παρά* gives the sense of a "perverse discussion," or "disputing." *Bereft* (ἀπεστερημένων). The difference between the A.V. "destitute" and the R.V. "bereft" is that the latter implies that they once had possession of the truth, but had lost it by their own fault. They had fallen away from the truth, and were twice dead. *Godliness is a way of gain*. The A.V., *that gain is godliness*, is clearly wrong, utterly confusing the subject with the predicate, and so destroying the connection between the clause and ver. 6. *A way of gain* (πορισμός); only here and in ver. 6 in the New Testament, but found in Wisd. xiii. 19; xiv. 2; Polybius, etc. It signifies "a source of gain," "a means of making money," or, in one word, "a trade." The same charge is brought against the heretical teachers (Titus i. 11). The cause in the A.V. and T.R., *from such withdraw thyself*, is not in the R.T.

Ver. 6.—*Godliness, etc.* The apostle takes up the sentiment which he had just condemned, and shows that in another sense it is most true. The godly man is rich indeed. For he wants nothing in this world but what God has given him, and has acquired riches which, unlike the riches of this world, he can take away with him (comp. Luke xii. 33). The enumeration of his acquired treasures follows, after a parenthetical depreciation of those of the covetous man, in ver. 11. The thought, as so often in St. Paul, is a little intricate, and its flow checked by parenthetical side-thoughts. But it seems to be as follows: "But godliness is, in one sense, a source of great gain, and moreover brings contentment with it—contentment, I say, for since we brought nothing into the world, and can carry nothing out, we have good reason to be content with the necessities of life, food and raiment. Indeed, those who strive for more, and pant after wealth, bring nothing but trouble upon themselves. For the love of money is the root of all evil, etc. Thou, therefore, O man of God, instead of reaching after worldly riches, procure the true wealth, and become rich in righteousness, godliness,

faith," etc. (ver. 11). The phrase, *ἔστι δὲ πορισμός μέγας ἡ εὐσεβεία μετὰ ἀνταρκείας*, should be construed by making the *μετὰ* couple πορισμός with ἀνταρκείας, so as to express that "godliness" is both "gain" and "contentment"—not as if ἀνταρκεία qualified εὐσεβεία—that would have been expressed by the collocation, *ἡ μετὰ ἀνταρκείας εὐσεβεία*. Contentment (ἀνταρκεία). The word occurs elsewhere in the New Testament only in 2 Cor. ix. 8, where it is rendered, both in the R.V. and the A.V., "sufficiency." The adjective ἀνταρκής, found in Phil. iv. 11 (and common in classical Greek), is rendered "content." It means "sufficient in or of itself"—needing no external aid—and is applied to persons, countries, cities, moral qualities, etc. The substantive ἀνταρκεία is the condition of the person, or thing, which is ἀνταρκής.

Ver. 7.—*This for this*, A.V.; *for neither can we for and it is certain we can*, A.V. and T.R.; *anything for nothing*, A.V. For neither, etc. The omission of *οὐδὲν* in the R.T., though justified by many of the best manuscripts, makes it difficult to construe the sentence, unless, with Buttman, we consider *ὅτι* as elliptical for *οὐδὲν ὅτι*. The R.V. "for neither" seems to imply that the truth, "neither can we carry anything out," is a consequence of the previous truth that "we brought nothing into the world," which is not true. The two truths are parallel, and the sentence would be perfectly clear without either *οὐδὲν* or *ὅτι*.

Ver. 8.—*But for and*, A.V.; *covering for raiment*, A.V.; *we shall be for let us be*, A.V. Food (διατροφάς); here only in the New Testament, but common in the LXX., rare in classical Greek. Covering (σκεπάσματα); also a *ἄραξ λεγόμενον* in the New Testament, not found in the LXX., and rare in classical Greek. The kindred words, σκέπη and σκέπας, with their derivatives, are used of the covering or shelter of clothes, or tents, or houses. St. Paul may therefore have used an uncommon word in order to comprise the two necessities of raiment and house, though Huther thinks this "more than improbable." The use of the word "covering" in the R.V. seems designed to favour this double application. Ellicott thinks the word "probably only refers to clothing." Alford says, "Some take 'covering' of both clothing and dwelling, perhaps rightly." If one knew where St. Paul got the word σκεπάσματα from, one could form a more decided opinion as to his meaning. We shall be therewith content (ἀρκεσθῆμεθα). The proper meaning of ἀρκεσθῆναι followed by a dative is "to be content with" (Luke iii. 14; Heb. xiii. 5). There is probably a covert hortative force in the use of the future here.

Ver. 9.—*Desire to for will, A.V.; a temptation for temptation, A.V.; many for into many, A.V.; such as for which, A.V. A temptation.* The reason of the insertion of the article before "temptation" in the R.V. seems to be that, as the three substantives all depend upon the one preposition *eis*, they ought all to be treated alike. But if so, the reasoning is not good, because "temptation" implies a state, not merely a single temptation. The prefixing of the article is therefore improper. It should be "temptation," as in the A.V. and in Matt. vi. 13; xxvi. 41; Luke xxii. 40, etc. *Snare (παγίδα);* as ch. iii. 7, note. The concurrence of the two words *πειρασμός* and *παγίς* show that the agency of Satan was in the writer's mind. Several good manuscripts, Fathers, and versions, add the words *τοῦ διαβόλου* after *παγίδα* (Huther). *Drown (βυθίζουσι);* only here and Luke v. 7 in the New Testament. Found also in 2 Macc. xii. 4, and in Polybius—"to sink," transitive. *Destruction and perdition (ὑλεθρον καὶ ἀπώλειαν).* The two words taken together imply utter ruin and destruction of body and soul. *Ὀλεθρος*, very common in classical Greek, occurs in 1 Cor. v. 5; 1 Thess. v. 3; 2 Thess. i. 9, and is limited in the first passage to the destruction of the body, by the words, *τῆς σαρκός*. *Ἀπώλεια*, less common in classical Greek, is of frequent use in the New Testament, and, when applied to persons, seems to be always used (except in Acts xxv. 16) in the sense of "perdition" (Matt. vii. 13; John xvii. 12; Rom. ix. 22; Phil. iii. 19; 2 Thess. ii. 3; Heb. x. 39; 2 Pet. iii. 7; Rev. xvii. 3, etc.).

Ver. 10.—*A root for the root, A.V.; all kinds of for all, A.V.; some reaching after for while some coveted after, A.V.; have been led astray for they have erred, A.V.; have pierced for pierced, A.V. Love of money (φιλαργυρία);* only here in the New Testament, but found in the LXX. and in classical Greek. The substantive *φιλάργυρος* is found in Luke xvi. 14 and 2 Tim. iii. 2. *A root.* The root is better English. Moreover, the following *πάντων τῶν κακῶν* (not *πόλλων κακῶν*) necessitates the giving a definite sense to *ρίζα*, though it has not the article; and Alford shows clearly that a word like *ρίζα*, especially when placed as here in an emphatic position, does not require it (comp. 1 Cor. xi. 3, where in the second and third clause *κεφαλῇ*, being in the emphatic place, has not the article). Alford also quotes a striking passage from Diog. Laert., in which he mentions a saying of the philosopher Diogenes that "the love of money (*ἡ φιλαργυρία*) is the metropolis, or home, *πάντων τῶν κακῶν*." *Reaching after (ὀρεγόμενοι).* It has been justly remarked that the phrase is slightly inaccurate. What some reach after

is not "the love of money," but the money itself. To avoid this, Hofmann (quoted by Huther) makes *ρίζα* the antecedent to *ἡς*, and the metaphor to be of a person turning out of his path to grasp a plant which turns out to be not desirable, but a root of bitterness. This is ingenious, but hardly to be accepted as the true interpretation. *Pierced themselves through (περιέπειραν);* only here in the New Testament, and rare in classical Greek. But the simple verb *πείρω*, to "pierce through," "transfix," applied especially to "spitting" meat, is very common in Homer, who also applies it metaphorically exactly as St. Paul does here, to grief or pain. *Ὀδύνησι πεπαισμένος*, "pierced with pain" ('II., v. 399).

Ver. 11.—*O man of God.* The force of this address is very great. It indicates that the money-lovers just spoken of were not and could not be "men of God," whatever they might profess; and it leads with singular strength to the opposite direction in which Timothy's aspirations should point. The treasures which he must covet as "a man of God" were "righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness." For the phrase, "man of God," see 2 Tim. iii. 17 and 2 Pet. i. 21. In the Old Testament it always applies to a prophet (Deut. xxxiii. 1; Judg. xiii. 6; 1 Sam. ii. 27; 1 Kings xii. 22; 2 Kings i. 9; Jer. xxxv. 4; and a great many other passages). St. Paul uses the expression with especial reference to Timothy and his holy office, and here, perhaps, in contrast with the *τοὺς ἀνθρώπους* mentioned in ver. 9. *Flee these things.* Note the sharp contrast between "the men" of the world, who reach after, and the man of God, who avoids, *φιλαργυρία*. The expression, "these things," is a little loose, but seems to apply to the love of money, and the desire to be rich, with all their attendant "foolish and hurtful lusts." The man of God avoids the perdition and manifold sorrows of the covetous, by avoiding the covetousness which is their root. *Follow after (δίωκε);* pursue, in direct contrast with *φεύγε*, flee from, avoid (see 2 Tim. ii. 22). *Meekness (πραΰναιελας).* This rare word, found in Philo, but nowhere in the New Testament, is the reading of the R.T. (instead of the *πραότης* of the T.R.) and accepted by almost all critics on the authority of all the older manuscripts. It has no perceptible difference of meaning from *πραότης*, meekness or gentleness.

Ver. 12.—*The faith for faith, A.V.; the life eternal for eternal life, A.V.; wait for art also, A.V. and T.R.; didst confess the good confession for hast professed a good profession, A.V.; in the sight of for before, A.V. Fight the good fight.* This is not quite a happy rendering. *Ἀγών* is the "contest" at the

Olympic assembly for any of the prizes, in wrestling, chariot-racing, foot-racing, music, or what not. Ἀγωνίζεσθαι τὸν ἀγῶνα is to "carry on such a contest" (comp. 2 Tim. iv. 7). The comparison is different from that in ch. i. 18, ἵνα στρατεύῃ . . . τὴν καλὴν στρατείαν, "That thou mayest war the good warfare." The faith. There is nothing to determine absolutely whether ἡ πίστις here means faith *subjectively* or "the faith" *objectively*, nor does it much matter. The result is the same; but the subjective sense seems the most appropriate. Lay hold, etc.; as the βραβεῖον or prize of the contest (see 1 Cor. ix. 24, 25). Whereunto thou wast called. So St. Paul continually (Rom. i. 1, 6, 7; viii. 28, 30; 1 Cor. i. 29; Eph. iv. 1; 1 Thess. ii. 12; and numerous other passages). He seems here to drop the metaphor, as in the following clause. Didst confess the good confession. The connection of this phrase with the call to eternal life, and the allusion to one special occasion on which Timothy "had confessed the good confession" of his faith in Jesus Christ, seems to point clearly to his baptism (see Matt. x. 32; John ix. 22; xii. 42; Heb. x. 23). The phrase, "the good confession," seems to have been technically applied to the baptismal confession of Christ (compare the other Church sayings, ch. i. 15; iii. 1; iv. 9; 2 Tim. ii. 11; Titus iii. 8). In the sight of many witnesses. The whole congregation of the Church, who were witnesses of his baptism (see the rubric prefixed to the Order of "Ministration of Public Baptism" in the Book of Common Prayer).

Ver. 13.—*I charge thee for I give thee charge, A.V.; of for before (in italics), A.V.; the for a, A.V. I charge thee.* It has been well observed that the apostle's language increases in solemnity as he approaches the end of the Epistle. This word παραγγέλλω is of frequent use in St. Paul's Epistles (1 Cor. vii. 10; 1 Thess. iv. 11; 2 Thess. iii. 4, 6, 10, 12; and above, ch. i. 8; iv. 11; v. 7). In the sight of God, etc. (compare the adjuration in ch. v. 21). Who quickeneth, etc. The T.R. has ζωοποιούστος. The R.T. has ζωογονούστος, with no difference of meaning. Both words are used in the LXX. as the rendering of the Pihel and Hiphil of חָיָה. As an epithet of "God," it sets before us the highest creative act of the Almighty as "the Lord, and the Giver of life;" and is equivalent to "the living God" (Matt. xxvi. 63), "the God of the spirits of all flesh" (Numb. xvi. 22). The existence of "life" is the one thing which baffles the ingenuity of science in its attempts to dispense with a Creator. The good confession refers to our Lord's confession of himself as "the Christ, the Son of God," in Matt. xxvii. 11; Luke xxiii. 3; John xviii. 36, 37, which is analogous to

the baptismal confession (Acts viii. 37 (T.R.); xvi. 31; xix. 4, 5). The natural word to have followed μαρτυρεῖν was μαρτυρίαν, as above ὁμολογῶν follows ὁμολόγησας; but St. Paul substitutes the word of cognate meaning, ὁμολογίαν, in order to keep the formula, ἡ καλὴ ὁμολογία.

Ver. 14.—*The for this, A.V.; without reproach for unrebukable, A.V.* The commandment (τὴν ἐντολήν). The phrase is peculiar, and must have some special meaning. Perhaps, as Bishop Wordsworth expounds it, "the commandment" is that law of faith and duty to which Timothy vowed obedience at his baptism, and is parallel to "the good confession." Some think that the command given in vers. 11, 12 is referred to; and this is the meaning of the A.V. "this." Without spot, without reproach. There is a difference of opinion among commentators, whether these two adjectives (ἄσπιλος, ἀνεπίληπτος) belong to the commandment or to the person, *i.e.* Timothy. The introduction of σέ after τηρῆσαι; the facts that τηρῆσαι τὰς ἐντολάς, without any addition, means "to keep the commandments," and that in the New Testament, ἄσπιλος and ἀνεπίληπτος always are used of persons, not things (Jas. i. 27; 1 Pet. i. 19; 2 Pet. iii. 14; ch. iii. 2; v. 7); and the consideration that the idea of the person being found blameless in, or kept blameless unto, the coming of Christ, is a frequent one in the Epistles (Jude 24; 2 Pet. iii. 14; 1 Cor. i. 8; Col. i. 22; 1 Thess. iii. 13; v. 23),—seem to point strongly, if not conclusively, to the adjectives ἄσπιλος and ἀνεπίληπτος here agreeing with σέ, not with ἐντολήν.¹ The appearing (τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν). The thought of the second advent of the Lord Jesus, always prominent in the mind of St. Paul (1 Cor. i. 7, 8; iv. 5; xv. 23; Col. iii. 4; 1 Thess. iii. 13; iv. 15; 2 Thess. i. 9, etc.), seems to have acquired fresh intensity amidst the troubles and dangers of the closing years of his life, both as an object of hope and as a motive of action (2 Tim. i. 10; ii. 12; iv. 1, 8; Titus ii. 13).

Ver. 15.—*Its own for his, A.V.* This correction seems to be manifestly right. The same phrase is rendered in ch. ii. 6 and Titus i. 3 "in due time," in the A.V.; but in the R.V. ii. 6 is "its own times," and in Titus i. 3 "his own seasons." In Gal. vi. 9 καίρῳ ἰδίῳ is also rendered "in due season," in both the A.V. and the R.V. Such a phrase as ἐν καιροῖς ἰδίοις must be taken everywhere in the same sense. It clearly means at the fitting or proper time, and corresponds to the πλήρωμα τοῦ χρόνου, "the fulness of time," in Gal. iv. 4. The two

¹ Bishop Ellicott, Dean Alford, Huther, and others, with De Wette, refer, however, these adjectives to τὴν ἐντολήν.

ideas are combined in Luke i. 20 (πληρωθήσονται εἰς τὸν καρπὸν αὐτῶν) and xxi. 24 (comp. Eph. i. 10). Shall show (δείξει). Δευννύειν ἐπιφανεῖν, "to show an appearing," is a somewhat unusual phrase, and is more classical than scriptural. The verb and the object are not of cognate sense (as "to display a display," or "to manifest a manifestation"), but the invisible God, God the Father, will, it is said, display the Epiphany of our Lord Jesus Christ. The wonder displayed and manifested to the world is the appearing of Christ in his glory. The Author of that manifestation is God. The blessed; ὁ μακάριος (not εὐλογητός, as in Mark xiv. 61), is only here and in ch. i. 11 (where see note) applied to God in Scripture. The blessed and only Potentate. The phrase is a remarkable one. Δυνάστης (Potentate), which is only found elsewhere in the New Testament in Luke i. 52 and Acts viii. 27, is applied to God here only. It is, however, so applied in 2 Macc. iii. 24; xii. 15; xv. 23, where we have Πάσης ἐξουσίας δυνάστης, τὸν μέγαν τοῦ κόσμου δυνάστην, and Δυνάστα τῶν οὐρανῶν; in all which places, as here, the phrase is used to signify, by way of contrast, the superiority of the power of God over all earthly power. In the first of the above-cited passages the language is singularly like that here used by St. Paul. For it is said that ὁ πάσης ἐξουσίας δυνάστης, "the Prince (or Potentate) of all power made a great apparition," or "appearing" (ἐπιφάνειαν μεγάλην ἐποίησεν), for the overthrow of the blasphemers and persecutor Heliodorus. St. Paul must have had this in his mind, and compared the effect of "the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ," in overthrowing the Neros of the earth with the overthrow of Heliodorus (comp. 1 Thess. i. 7—10). King of kings, and Lord of lords, etc. (compare the slightly different phrase in Rev. xvii. 14 and xix. 16, applied to the Son). So in Ps. cxxxvi. 2, 3, God is spoken of as "God of gods, and Lord of lords."

Ver. 16.—*Light unapproachable for the light which no man can approach unto*, A.V.; *eternal for everlasting*, A.V. Unapproachable (ἀπόσπαστον); only here in the New Testament, but found occasionally in the later classics, corresponding to the more common ἄβατος. Whom no man hath seen, nor can see (comp. ch. i. 17 (where see note) and Exod. xxxiii. 20—23). The appearance of the "God of Israel" to Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, related in Exod. xxxiv. 9—11, was that of the Son in anticipation of the Incarnation. The invisibility of the essential Godhead is also predicated in our Lord's saying, "God is a Spirit" (John iv. 24). This whole passage is a magnificent embodiment of the attributes of the living God, supreme blessed-

ness and almighty power, universal dominion, and unchangeable being, inscrutable majesty, radiant holiness, and glory inaccessible and unapproachable by his creatures, save through the mediation of his only begotten Son.

Ver. 17.—*This present for this*, A.V.; *have their hope set on the uncertainty of for trust in uncertain*, A.V.; *on God for in the living God*, A.V. and T.R. Charge (παράγγελλε); as in ch. i. 3; iv. 11; v. 7; and in ver. 13, and elsewhere frequently. Rich in this present world. Had St. Paul in his mind the parable of Dives and Lazarus (comp. Luke xvi. 19, 25)? That they be not high-minded (μὴ ὑψηλοφρονεῖν); elsewhere only in Rom. xi. 20. The words compounded with ὑψηλός have mostly a bad sense—"haughtiness," "boastfulness," and the like. The uncertainty (ἀβηλότης); here only in the New Testament, but used in the same sense in Polybius (see ἄβηλος in 1 Cor. xiv. 8; and ἀβήλως in 1 Cor. ix. 26). The A.V., though less literal, expresses the sense much better than the R.V., which is hardly good English. Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; for enjoyment. The gifts are God's. Trust, therefore, in the Giver, not in the gift. The gift is uncertain; the Giver liveth for ever. (For the sentiment that God is the Giver of all good, comp. Jas. i. 17; Ps. civ. 28; cxlv. 16, etc.)

Ver. 18.—*That they be ready for ready*, A.V. Do good (ἀγαθοεργεῖν); here only, for the more common ἀγαθοποιεῖν. That they be rich in good works (ch. v. 10, note); not merely in the perishing riches of this present world—the same sentiment as Matt. vi. 19—21; Luke xii. 33 and 21. Ready to distribute (εὐμεταδότους); here only in the New Testament, and rarely in later classical Greek. The opposite, "close-handed," is δυσμεταδότος. The verb μεταδίδωμι means "to give to others a share or portion of what one has" (Luke iii. 11; Rom. i. 11; xii. 8; Eph. iv. 28; 1 Thess. ii. 8). Willing to communicate (κοινωνικούς); here only in the New Testament, but found in classical Greek in a slightly different sense. "Communicative" is the exact equivalent, though in this wider use it is obsolete. We have the same precept in Heb. xiii. 16. "To do good and to communicate forget not." (For κοινωνεῖν in the sense of "giving," see Rom. xii. 13; Gal. vi. 6; Phil. iv. 15; and for κοινωνία in the same sense, see Rom. xv. 26; 2 Cor. ix. 13; Heb. xiii. 16.)

Ver. 19.—*The life which is life indeed for eternal life*, A.V. and T.R. Laying up in store (ἀποθησαυρίζοντες); only here in the New Testament, but once in Wisd. iii. 3, and occasionally in classical Greek. A good foundation (θεμέλιον καλόν). The idea of a foundation is always maintained in the use of θεμέλιος, whether it is used

literally or figuratively (Luke xi. 48; Eph. ii. 20; Rev. xxi. 14, etc.). There is, at first sight, a manifest confusion of metaphors in the phrase, "laying up in store a foundation." Bishop Ellicott, following Wiesinger, understands "a wealth of good works as a foundation." Alford sees no difficulty in considering the "foundation" as a treasure. Others have conjectured *κευμήλιον*, "a stored treasure," for *θεμέλιον*. Others understand *θεμέλιον* in the sense of *θέμα*, a deposit. Others take *ἀποθησαυρίζειν* in the sense of "acquiring," without reference to its etymology. But this is unlikely, the context being about the use of money, though in part favoured by the use of *θησαυρίζειν* in 2 Pet. iii. 7. The reader must choose for himself either to adopt one of the above explanations, or to credit St. Paul with an unimportant confusion of metaphors. Anyhow, the doctrine is clear that wealth spent for God and his Church is repaid with interest, and becomes an abiding treasure. Life indeed (*τῆς ὄντως ζωῆς*); so ch. v. 3, 5, *τὰς ὄντως χήρας, ἢ ὄντως χήρα*, "widows indeed;" and (John viii. 36) *ὄντως ἐλεύθεροι*, "free indeed," in opposition to the freedom which the Jews claimed as the seed of Abraham.

Ver. 20.—*Guard for keep, A.V.; unto thee for thy trust, A.V.; turning away from for avoiding, A.V.; the profane for profane and vain, A.V.; the knowledge which is falsely for science, falsely, A.V. Guard that which is committed unto thee; τὴν παραθήκην* (*παρακαταθήκην*, T.R.). *Guard for keep* is hardly an improvement. The meaning of "keep," like that of *φυλάττω*, is to guard, keep watch over, and, by so doing, to preserve safe and uninjured. This meaning is well brought out in the familiar words of Ps. cxxi., "He that keepeth thee will not slumber. . . . He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord himself is thy Keeper" (so too Ps. cxxvii. 1; Gen. xxviii. 15, etc.). *Παραθήκη* or *παρακαταθήκη*, occurs elsewhere in the New Testament only in 2 Tim. i. 12, 14, where the apostle uses it (in ver. 12) of his own soul, which he has committed to the safe and faithful keeping of the Lord Jesus Christ; but in ver. 14 in the same sense as here. "That good thing which was committed unto thee guard ['keep,' A.V.]" There does not seem to be any difference between *παραθήκη* and *παρακαταθήκη*, which both mean "a deposit," and are used differently in classical Greek, though the latter is the more common. The precept to Timothy here is to keep diligent and watch-

ful guard over the faith committed to his trust; to preserve it unaltered and uncorrupt, so as to hand it down to his successors exactly the same as he had received it. Oh that the successors of the apostles had always kept this precept (see Ordination of Priests)! **Turning away from** (*ἐκτρέπόμενος*); only here in the middle voice, "turning from," "avoiding," with a transitive sense. In the passive voice it means "to turn out of the path," as in ch. i. 6; v. 15; 2 Tim. iv. 4. The profane babblings (see ch. iv. 7; 2 Tim. ii. 16); *κενοφωνία*; only here and 2 Tim. ii. 16, "the utterance of empty words," "words of the lips" (2 Kings xviii. 20). **Oppositions** (*ἀντιθέσεις*); here only in the New Testament. It is a term used in logic and in rhetoric by Plato, Aristotle, etc., for "oppositions" and "antitheses," laying one doctrine by the side of another for comparison, or contrast, or refutation. It seems to allude to the particular method used by the heretics to establish their tenets, in opposition to the statements of the Church on particular points—such as the Law, the Resurrection, etc. The knowledge which is falsely so called. There is a very similar intimation of the growth of an empty philosophy, whose teaching was antagonistic to the teaching of Christ in Col. ii. 8, and with which St. Paul contrasts the true *γνῶσις* in ver. 3. This was clearly the germ (called by Bishop Lightfoot "Gnostic Judaism") of what was later more fully developed as the Gnostic heresy, which, of course, derived its name from *γνῶσις*, knowledge or science, to which they laid claim (see Bishop Lightfoot's able 'Introduction to the Epistle to Colossians,' specially p. 100; and his notes on ch. ii. 8, *sqq.*).

Ver. 21.—*You for thee, A.V. and T.R. The R.T. omits Amen. Professing* (*ἐπαγγελλόμενοι*); see ch. ii. 10, note. *Have erred* (*ἡστόχησαν*); ch. i. 6, note. *Grace be with you*. The authorities for *σοῦ* and *ὑμῶν* respectively are somewhat evenly balanced. The T.R. *σοῦ* seems in itself preferable, as throughout St. Paul addresses Timothy personally, and as there are no salutations here, as in 2 Timothy and Titus (see ch. i. 18; iii. 14; iv. 6, etc.; vi. 11, 20). This shorter form, *ἡ χάρις*, is used in the pastoral Epistles (2 Tim. iv. 22; Titus iii. 35) for the fuller and more usual form, *Ἡ χάρις τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ* (Rom. xvi. 20; 1 Cor. xvi. 23; 2 Thess. iii. 18, and elsewhere). The short form also occurs in Heb. xiii. 25. The words are a gracious, peaceful ending to the Epistle.

HOMILETICS.

Vers. 1, 2.—*The doctrine of God.* Slaves, led doubtless by the miseries of their condition to seek the ennobling, comforting privileges of the gospel, formed a considerable portion of the first congregations of disciples (see the names in Rom. xvi.; 1 Cor. i. 27, 28; Eph. vi. 5—8; Col. iii. 22—25; Titus ii. 9; Philem. 10, 16; 1 Pet. ii. 18, etc.). Hence so many exhortations addressed specially to them. In nothing, perhaps, does the Divine excellency of the gospel show itself more strikingly than in the adaptation of its precepts to such different classes of society, and in the wise moderation with which it met the social evils of life. The subjects of a Nero are bid to honour the king, the slave is told to count his master worthy of all honour; and the motive for this self-denying moderation is the paramount desire not to bring any reproach upon the gospel of Christ. The world shall not be able to say that Christianity is a breeder of confusion, or that the peaceable order of society is endangered by the fanaticism of the servants of Christ. And yet the manly self-respect of the slave is wonderfully increased by being reminded that he is the servant of Christ; or, again, by the thought of his spiritual freedom as a child of God; or, again, by his brotherhood with his master and partnership with him in the faith and love of the gospel of Christ. He has before him a career as noble and as dignified as his master, though that master were Cæsar himself. And while he patiently submits to the peculiar trials of his bodily condition, he is transported into a region where bodily distinctions are of no account—where the petty differences of rich and poor, bond and free, are swallowed up, and melt away, before the common glory of the children of God and the common privileges of Christian fellowship. And yet all the while he maintains the respect and obedience of the slave to the master. Truly the doctrine of God is a wise, an excellent, and a worthy doctrine, and carries with it its own credentials, that it is from God.

Vers. 3—5.—*Heterodoxy.* It is a great mistake to limit the notion of heterodoxy to the holding of wrong opinions in dogmatic theology. Heterodoxy is teaching anything otherwise than as the Word of God teaches it. Here they are declared to be heterodox who depart from the wholesome teaching of Christ concerning the duties of slaves to their masters, and use language in speaking to slaves which is provocative of strife and envy, of railings and suspicions. Such men, instead of being guided by a disinterested love of truth, are actuated by selfish motives. They seek to curry favour with those whose cause they espouse, and receive in money the reward of their patronage of the cause. And so we may generally discern between the orthodox and the heterodox by the methods they pursue, and the results they attain. The one seeks to promote peace and contentment by gentle words and by counsels of love and patience, and has his reward in the happiness of those whom he advises. The other flatters, and inflames the passions of those whom he pretends to befriend; plays upon the bad parts of human nature; raises questions which tend to loosen the joints which bind society together; declaims and fumes and agitates, and receives in money or other selfish advantages the price of his mischievous patronage. Disinterested love is the characteristic of orthodox teaching, selfish gain that of the heterodox. Peace and contentment are the fruit of the one, strife and suspicion are the fruit of the other.

Vers. 6—21.—*The contrast.* There is no more effectual way of bringing out the peculiar beauties and excellences of any system or character than by contrasting with it the opposite system or character. Let us do this in regard to the two characters which are here brought before us, and the uses of money by them respectively.

I. THE MONEY-LOVER. The love of money sits at the helm of his inner man. It is the spring of all his thoughts, desires, and actions. Observe what is his ruling motive, what takes the lead in his plans and schemes of life, and you will find that it is the desire to be rich. To be rich ranks in his estimation before being good or doing good; and personal goodness and benevolence towards others, if they have existed before the entering into the heart of the love of money, gradually fade and die away under its withering influence. As the thistles and rushes, the docks and the plantains, prevail, the good herbage disappears. A hard selfish character, indifferent to the feelings and wants

of others, and ready to brush on one side every obstacle which stands in the way of setting, is the common result of the love of money. But in many cases it leads on into impiety and crime, and through them to sorrows and perdition. It was his greed for the wages of unrighteousness which urged Balaam on to his destruction; it was his greed for money that made Judas a thief, a traitor, and a murderer of his Lord. Many an heresiarch has adopted false doctrines and led schisms merely as a means of enriching himself at the expense of his followers; and every day we see crimes of the blackest dye springing from the lust of riches. In other cases the coveted possession of wealth is followed by inordinate pride and contempt of those who are not rich, by a feeling of superiority to all the restraints which bind other men, and by a headlong descent into the vices and self-indulgences to which money paves the way. In a word, then, the lover of money stands before us as at best a selfish man—a man of low and narrow ends; one pandering to his own base desires; one sacrificing to an ignoble and futile purpose all the loftier parts of his own nature; one from whom his fellow-men get no good, and often get much harm; one whose toil and labour at the best end in emptiness, and very often lead him into sorrow and destruction. His progress is a continued debasement of himself, and moral bankruptcy is his end.

II. THE MAN OF GOD IS OF A DIFFERENT MOULD. He views his own nature and his own wants in their true light. He is a man, he is a moral agent, he is a child of God. His hunger and thirst are after the things that are needful for the life and the growth of his immortal soul, his very self. He is a man; he is one of those whom the Lord Jesus is not ashamed to call his brethren, and who has been made partaker of his Divine nature, and therefore, like his Divine Lord, he wishes to live, not for himself, but for his brethren, whom he loves even as Christ loved them and gave himself for them. And so, on the one hand, he lays himself out to enrich himself with those treasures which make a man rich toward God—righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness; and, on the other, he uses his worldly wealth for the comfort of the poor and needy; doing good, distributing freely of his substance for every good work, and admitting others to a share of the wealth that God has given him. It is very remarkable, too, how he both degrades and yet elevates wealth. He degrades it by depriving it of all its false value. He does not trust in it, because he knows its uncertainty; he does not desire it, because he knows its dangers; he does not boast of it, because he knows it adds nothing to his real worth. But he elevates it by making it an instrument of doing good to others, and by making it a provocative of love to man and of thankfulness to God; and though it is so fleeting and so uncertain in itself, he forces into it an element of eternity by consecrating it to God, and compelling it to bear witness on his behalf in the great day of judgment that he loved Christ and did good to those whom Christ loves.

To sum up, the money-lover, by putting a false value upon money, makes it a snare and an instrument of hurt to himself and others, and an eternal loss to his own soul; the man of God, by putting the true value upon money, makes it a joyful possession to himself and his brethren, a nourisher of unselfish virtue, and an eternal gain.

Vers. 11—16.—*The man of God.* The character of the man of God is here portrayed with a master's hand. We may go back and contemplate it with a little more exactness. He is covetous, he is eager in the pursuit of good things; but the good things which he covets and pursues are the everlasting possessions of the soul. And what are these? *Righteousness*—that great quality of God himself; that quality which makes eternal, unchangeable, right the sole and inflexible rule of conduct. *Righteousness*—that condition of thought and will and purpose which does not fluctuate with the changing opinions and fashions of inconstant men, which does not vary according to the outward influences to which it is subject, which is not overborne by fear, or appetite, or persuasion, or interest; but abides steadfast, unaltered, the same under all circumstances and through all time. And with *righteousness*, which he has in common with God, he covets *godliness*, the proper relative condition of the rational creature towards the Creator. *Godliness* is that reverential, devout attitude towards God which we sometimes call piety, sometimes holiness, sometimes devotion. It comprehends the sentiments of fear, love, and reverence which a good man entertains toward God; and the whole conduct, such as worship, prayer, almsgiving, etc., which springs from those

sentiments. And though it cannot be predicated of God that he is *εὐεργής*, it is an essential feature of the godly man, who therefore covets it as an integral part of the wealth of the soul. And then, by a natural association with this reverential attitude towards God described by "godliness," there follows *faith*; the entire reliance of the soul upon God's goodness, and specially on all his promises—those promises which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus; *faith* which fastens on Jesus Christ as the sum and substance, the head and completeness, of God's good will to man; as the infallible proof, which nothing can detract from, of God's purpose of love to man; as the immovable rock of man's salvation, which may not and cannot be moved for ever. And, as by a necessary law, from this faith there flows forth *love*; love to God and love to man; *love* which, like righteousness, is an attribute which the man of God has in common with God; love which, in proportion to its pureness and its intensity, assimilates the man of God to God himself, and is therefore the most prized portion of his treasures. Nor must another essential virtue of the man of God be overlooked by him, and that is *patience*. Just as *godliness* and *faith* are qualities in the man of God relatively to God, so is patience a necessary quality relatively to the hindrances and impediments of the evil world in which he lives. The primary idea of *ὑπομονή* is *continuance*—"patient continuance," as it is well rendered in the Authorized Version of Rom. ii. 7. The enmity of the world, the outward and inward temptations to evil, the weariness and tension induced by prolonged resistance, are constantly pressing upon the man of God and counselling cessation from a wearisome and (it is suggested) a fruitless struggle. He has, therefore, need of patience; it is only through faith and patience that he can obtain the promises. He must endure to the end if he would grasp the coveted salvation. Patience must mingle with his faith, patience must mingle with his hope, and patience must mingle with his love. There must be no fainting, no halting, no turning aside, no growing weary in well-doing. Tribulations may come, afflictions may press sore, provocations may be multiplied, and labours may be a heavy burden; but the man of God, with the sure hope of the coming of Christ to cheer and support him, will go steadily forward, will endure, will stand fast, unto the end. And as regards the provocations of men, he will endure them with *meekness*. Not only will he not turn back from his purpose on account of them, but he will not let his spirit be ruffled by them. He will still be kind to those who are unkind, and gentle with those who are rough. He will render good for evil, and blessing for cursing, if so be he may overcome evil with good, ever setting before him the blessed example of him "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." Thus fighting the good fight of faith, he lays hold and keeps hold of eternal life, and will be found without spot, unrebukable, in that great and blessed day of the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, "to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Ver. 1.—*The duties of slaves to unbelieving masters.* The apostle next proceeds to deal with the distinctions of civil duty, and takes up the case of a very numerous but miserable class which appears to have been largely attracted to the gospel in primitive times.

I. THE HONOUR DUE TO PAGAN MASTERS. "Whoever are under the yoke as bond-servants, let them reckon their own masters worthy of all honour." 1. *The condition of the slaves was one of much hardship.* There was practically no limit to the power of the masters over the slaves. They might be gentle and just, or capricious and cruel. The slaves had no remedy at law against harsh treatment, as they had no hope of escape from bondage. 2. *Yet their liberty had not been so restricted that they had not the opportunity of hearing the gospel.* There were Christian slaves. Their hard life was ameliorated, not merely by the blessed hopes of the gospel, but by the privilege of spiritual equality with their masters which was one of its distinguishing glories. 3. *The gospel did not interfere with the duty of obedience which they owed to their masters.* They were to give them all honour—not merely outward subjection, but inward respect. Christianity did not undertake to overturn social relations. If it had done so, it would have been revolutionary in the last degree; it would have armed the whole forces of the

Roman empire against it; it would itself have been drowned in blood; and it would have led to the merciless slaughter of the slaves themselves. Yet Christianity prepared the way from the very first for the complete abolition of slavery. The fact that with the great Master in heaven "there was no respect of persons," and that "in Jesus Christ there was neither bond nor free, but all were one in Christ," would not justify the slaves in repudiating their present subjection, while it held out the hope of their eventual emancipation. They must not, therefore, abuse their liberty under the gospel. 4. *Yet there was a limit to the slave's obedience.* He could only obey his master so far as was consistent with the laws of God and his gospel, consenting to suffer rather than outrage his conscience. Cases of this sort might arise, but they would not prejudice the gospel, like a simple revolt against existing relationships.

II. THE REASON FOR THE DUE HONOUR GIVEN TO THEIR PAGAN MASTERS. "That the Name of God and his doctrine may not be blasphemed." 1. *There would be a serious danger of such a result if slaves were either to withhold due service to their masters or to repudiate all subjection.* God and his doctrine would be dishonoured in the eyes of their masters, because they would be regarded as sanctioning insubordination. Thus a deep and widespread prejudice would arise to prevent the gospel reaching their pagan masters. 2. *It is thus possible for the meanest members of the Church to do honour to God and the gospel.* The apostle contemplates their adorning "of the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things" (Titus ii. 10). 3. *The same considerations apply to the case of domestic servants in our own day.* The term translated here "slaves" is used with some latitude in the Scripture. It applies sometimes to persons entirely free, as to David in relation to Saul (1 Sam. xix. 4), to Christians generally (Rom. vi. 16; 1 Pet. ii. 16), to apostles, prophets, and ministers (Gal. i. 10; 2 Tim. ii. 24), and to the higher class of dependents (Matt. xviii. 23; xxi. 34). Thus the term implies a relation of dependence without legal compulsion. Christian servants must yield a willing and cheerful service that they may thus honour the gospel.—T. C.

Ver. 2.—*The duties of slaves to Christian masters.* This relationship would be less common than the other.

I. THE RESPECT DUE TO CHRISTIAN MASTERS. "And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them because they are brethren, but the rather serve them." The duty is presented in a twofold form. 1. *Negatively.* "Let them not despise them." The false teachers might tell the slaves that their servitude was inconsistent with Christian liberty. The slaves might thus, especially in the case of Christian masters, regard them as fully their equals on the ground of the common brotherhood of believers, and refuse them the respect due to their position. 2. *Positively.* "But the rather serve them." The best way of effecting a partial amelioration of their condition was by rendering a service all the more faithful, because it was rendered to a brother in Christ. Servants must never under any circumstances be disrespectful.

II. THE REASONS FOR THIS COMMAND. They are twofold. 1. *Because their masters are brethren.* The slaves ought, therefore, to treat them with Christian respect and generosity, knowing that such a service is showing kindness to "brethren." 2. *Because those who were "to receive the benefit" of their hearty and willing service were "faithful and beloved."* This thought ought to dignify as well as ameliorate the position of the slave. Such masters were willing to receive such service.

III. THE NECESSITY OF ENFORCING THESE DUTIES. "These things teach and exhort." 1. *It was necessary for the comfort of the slave himself as well as for the interests of the master.* 2. *It was necessary for the credit and honour of the gospel,* which would be gravely compromised by restiveness or insubordination on the part of the great subject class. 3. *The gospel is not vulgarized by such counsel.* It rather dignifies human life in its meanest respects by infusing into it a new beauty and a new generosity of feeling.—T. C.

Vers. 3—5.—*A warning against those who oppose such wholesome teaching.* I. THE OPPOSITION TO APOSTOLIC TEACHING ON THE DUTIES OF SLAVES. "If any one teach thee other doctrine, and does not assent to sound words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness." 1. *The nature of this false teaching.* It points, as the word signifies, to "a different doctrine" from that of the

apostle. There were false teachers in Ephesus who, from a pretended interest in the class of Christian slaves, taught them that the gospel was a political charter of emancipation; for the yoke of Christ was designed to break every other yoke. They must have been of the class referred to elsewhere who "despised government" (2 Pet. ii. 10; Jude 8), and encouraged disobedience to parents. The tendency of their teaching would be to sow the seeds of discontent in the minds of the slaves, and its effects would be to plunge them into a contest with society which would have the unhappiest effects.

2. *The opposition of this teaching to Divine truth.* (1) It was opposed to "wholesome words," to words without poison or taint of corruption, such as would maintain social relations on a basis of healthy development. (2) It was opposed to the words of Christ, either directly or through his apostles. He had dropped sayings of a suggestive character which could not but touch the minds of the slave class: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's;" "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth;" "Resist not evil;" "Love your enemies, pray for them which despitefully use you." (3) It was opposed to the doctrine of godliness. It was a strange thing for teachers in the Church to espouse doctrines opposed to the interests of godliness. The disobedience of slaves would commit them to a course of ungodly dishonouring of God and his gospel.

II. THE MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL CHARACTER OF THESE FALSE TEACHERS. 1. *They were "besotted with pride."* They were utterly wanting in the humility of spirit which the gospel engenders, but were puffed up with an empty show of knowledge. 2. *Yet they were ignorant.* "Knowing nothing." They had no true understanding of the social risks involved in their doctrine of emancipation, or of the true method of ameliorating the condition of the slaves. 3. *They "doted about questions and disputes about words."* They had a diseased appetency for all sorts of profitless discussions turning upon the meanings of words, which had no tendency to promote godliness, but rather altercations and bad feeling of all sorts—"from which cometh envy, strife, evil-speakings, wicked suspicions, incessant quarrels." These controversial collisions sowed the seeds of all sorts of bitter hatred. 4. *The moral deficiency of these false teachers.* They were "men corrupted in their mind, destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is gain." (1) They had first corrupted the Word of God, and thus prepared the way for the debasement of their own mind, leading in turn to that pride and ignorance which were their most distinguishing qualities. (2) They were "deprived of the truth." It was theirs once, but they forfeited this precious treasure by their unfaithfulness and their corruption. It is a dangerous thing to tamper with the truth. (3) They heard that "godliness was a source of gain." They did not preach contentment to the slaves, or induce them to acquiesce with patience in their hard lot, but rather persuaded them to use religion as a means of worldly betterment. Such counsel would have disorganizing, disintegrating effects upon society. But it was, besides, a degradation of true religion. Godliness was not designed to be a merely lucrative business, or to be followed only so far as it subserved the promotion of worldly interests. Simon Magus and such men as "made merchandise" of the disciples are examples of this class. Such persons would "teach things which they ought not for the sake of base gain" (Titus i. 11).—T. C.

Vers. 6—8.—*The real gain of true godliness.* The apostle, after his manner, expands his idea beyond the immediate occasion that led to it.

I. THE GAIN OF GODLINESS WITH CONTENTMENT. "But godliness with contentment is great gain." 1. *Godliness is a gain in itself, because it has "the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."* Godly men come into happy and thriving circumstances, for they are taught to pursue their callings with due industry, foresight, and perseverance. 2. *Godliness, allied to contentment, is great gain.* (1) This does not mean that contentment is a condition necessary to the gainful character of godliness, but is rather an effect of godliness and part of its substantial gain. It is a calm and sedate temper of mind about worldly interests. It is God's wisdom and will not to give to all men alike, but the contented mind is not disquieted by this fact. (2) The godly man is content with what he possesses; submits meekly to God's will, and bears patiently the adverse dispensations of his providence. The godly heart is freed from the thirst for perishing treasures, because it possesses treasures of a higher and more enduring character.

II. THE REASON FOR THIS SENTIMENT. "For we brought nothing into the world, because neither are we able to take anything out of it." 1. *We are appointed by God to come naked into the world.* We may be born heirs to vast possessions, but they do not become ours till we are actually born. Rich and poor alike bring nothing into the world. 2. *This fact is a reason for the statement that we can carry nothing out of the world.* It is between birth and death we can hold our wealth. The rich man cannot carry his estates with him into the grave. He will have no need of them in the next life. 3. *There could be no contentment if we could take anything with us at death,* because in that case the future would be dependent upon the present. 4. *The lesson to be learned from these facts is that we ought not eagerly to grasp such essentially earthly and transitory treasures.*

III. THE TRUE WISDOM OF CONTENTMENT. "But if we have food and raiment, with these let us be satisfied." These are what Jacob desired, Agur prayed for, and Christ taught his disciples to make the subject of daily supplication. The contented godly have these gifts along with God's blessing. The Lord does not encourage his people to enlarge their desires inordinately.—T. C.

Ver. 9.—*The dangers of the eager haste to be rich.* I. THE EAGER PURSUIT OF THE WORLD IS TO BE SHUNNED. "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare." 1. *The apostle does not condemn the possession of riches,* which have, in reality, no moral character; for they are only evil where they are badly used. Neither does he speak of rich men; for he would not condemn such men as Abraham, Joseph of Arimathea, Gaius, and others; nor such rich men as use their wealth righteously as good stewards of God. 2. *He condemns the haste to be rich,* not only because wealth is not necessary for a life of godly contentment, but because of its social and moral risks.

II. THE DANGERS OF THIS EAGER PURSUIT OF WEALTH. They "fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." 1. *There is a temptation to unjust gain which leads men into the snare of the devil.* There is a sacrifice of principle, the abandonment of conscientious scruples, in the hurry to accumulate wealth. 2. *The temptation in its turn makes way for many lusts* which are "foolish," because they are unreasonable, and exercised upon things that are quite undesirable; and which are "hurtful," because they injure both body and soul, and all a man's best interests. 3. *These lusts in turn carry their own retribution.* They "drown men in destruction and perdition." (1) This is more than moral degradation. (2) It is a wreck of the body accompanied by the ruin of the immortal soul.—T. C.

Ver. 10.—*The root of all evil.* "For the love of money is the root of all evil." This almost proverbial saying is intended to support the statement of the previous verse.

I. THE LOVE OF MONEY AS A ROOT OF EVIL. 1. *The assertion is not concerning money, which, as we have seen, is neither good nor bad in itself, but concerning the love of money.* 2. *It is not asserted that there are not other roots of evil besides covetousness.* This thought was not present to the apostle's mind. 3. *It is not meant that a covetous man will be entirely destitute of all virtuous feeling.* 4. *It means that a germ of all evil lies in one with the love of money; that there is no kind of evil to which a man may not be led through an absorbing greed for money.* It is really a root-sin, for it leads to care, fear, malice, deceit, oppression, envy, bribery, perjury, contentiousness.

II. UNHAPPY EFFECTS OF THE LOVE OF MONEY. "Which some having coveted after have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." 1. *It led to apostasy.* They made shipwreck of their Christian principles. They surrendered the faith. The good seed of the Word was choked by the deceitfulness of riches, and, like Demas, they forsook the Word, having loved this present world. 2. *It involved the pangs of conscience,* to the destruction of their own happiness. They felt the piercings of that inward monitor who forebodes the future destruction.—T. C.

Ver. 11.—*Personal admonition addressed to Timothy himself.* The apostle now

turns from his warning to those desiring to be rich to the practical exhortation to strive for the true riches.

I. THE TITLE BY WHICH TIMOTHY IS ADDRESSED. "O man of God." 1. *It was the familiar title of the Old Testament prophets*, and might appropriately apply to a New Testament evangelist like Timothy. 2. *But in the New Testament it has a more general reference*, applying as it does to all the faithful in Christ Jesus (2 Tim. iii. 17). The name is very expressive. It signifies (1) a man who belongs to God; (2) who is dedicated to God; (3) who finds in God, rather than in riches, his true portion; (4) who lives for God's glory (1 Cor. x. 31).

II. THE WARNING ADDRESSED TO TIMOTHY. "Flee these things." It might seem unnecessary to warn so devoted a Christian against the love of riches, with its destructive results; but Timothy was now in an important position in a wealthy city, which contained "rich" men (ver. 17), and may have been tempted by gold and ease and popularity to make trivial sacrifices to truth. The holiest heart is not without its inward subtleties of deceit.

III. THE POSITIVE EXHORTATION ADDRESSED TO TIMOTHY. "And follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meek-spiritedness." These virtues group themselves into pairs. 1. *Righteousness and godliness*; referring to a general conformity to the Law of God in relation to the duties owing respectively to God and man, like the similar expressions—"live righteously and godly"—of Titus ii. 12. (1) Righteousness is (a) not the "righteousness of God," for that had been already attained by Timothy; but (b) the doing of justice between man and man, which would be for the honour of religion among men. Any undue regard for riches would cause a swerve from righteousness. (2) Godliness includes (a) holiness of heart, (b) holiness of life, in which lies the true gain for two worlds. 2. *Faith and love*. These are the two foundation-principles of the gospel. (1) Faith is at once (a) the instrument of our justification, (b) the root-principle of Christian life, and (c) the continuously sustaining principle of that life. (2) Love is (a) the immediate effect of faith, for "faith worketh by love" (Gal. v. 6); (b) it is the touchstone of true religion and the bond of perfectness; (c) it is the spring of evangelical obedience, for it is "the fulfilling of the Law" (Rom. xii. 8); (d) it is our protection in the battle of life, for it is "the breastplate of love" (1 Thess. v. 8). 3. *Patience, meek-spiritedness*. These represent two principles which ought to operate in power in presence of gainsayers and enemies.

—T. C.

Ver. 12.—*The good fight and its results*. Instead of the struggle of the covetous for wealth, there ought to be the struggle of the faithful to lay hold on the prize of eternal life.

I. THE CHRISTIAN STRUGGLE. "Fight the good fight of faith." 1. *The enemies in this warfare*. The world, the flesh, and the devil; the principalities and powers; the false teachers, with their arts of seduction. 2. *The warfare itself*. It is "a good fight." (1) The term suggests that Christian life is not a mystic quietism, but an active effort against evil. (2) It is a good fight, because (a) it is in a good cause—for God and truth and salvation; (b) it is under a good Captain—Jesus Christ, the Captain of our salvation; (c) it has a good result—"eternal life." 3. *The weapons in this warfare*. "Faith." It is "the shield of faith" (Eph. vi. 16). This is not a carnal, but a spiritual weapon. Faith represents, indeed, "the whole armour of God," which is mighty for victory. It is faith that secures "the victory that overcometh the world" (1 John iv. 4, 5).

II. THE END OF THE CHRISTIAN STRUGGLE. "Lay hold on eternal life." 1. *Eternal life is the prize, the crown, to be laid hold of by those who are faithful to death*. 2. *It is the object of our effectual calling*. "To which thou wast called" by the grace and power of the Holy Spirit. 3. *It is the subject of our public profession*. "And didst confess the good confession before many witnesses." Evidently either at his baptism, or at his ordination to the ministry, when many witnesses would be present. 4. *This eternal life is to be laid hold of*. (1) It is held forth as the prize of the high calling of God, as the recompense of reward. (2) But the believer is to lay hold of it even now by faith, having a believing interest in it as a possession yet to be acquired in all its glorious fulness.—T. C.

Vers. 13—16.—*The solemn charge pressed anew upon Timothy.* As he nears the end of the Epistle, the apostle, with a deeper solemnity of tone, repeats the charge he has given to his young disciple.

I. THE NATURE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHARGE. "I charge thee . . . that thou keep the commandment without spot and without reproach." 1. *The commandment is the Christian doctrine in its aspect as a rule of life and discipline.* 2. *It was to be kept with all purity and faithfulness*—"without spot and without reproach"—so that it should be unstained by no error of life, or suffer from no reproach of unfaithfulness. He must preach the pure gospel sincerely, and his life must be so circum-spect that his ministry should not be blamed by the Church here or by Christ hereafter.

II. THE SOLEMN APPEAL BY WHICH THE CHARGE IS SUSTAINED. "I give thee charge in the sight of God, who keepeth all things alive, and Christ Jesus, who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate." The apostle, having referred to Timothy's earlier confession before many witnesses, reminds him of the more tremendous presence of God himself, and of Christ Jesus. 1. *God is represented here as Preserver, in allusion to the dangers of Timothy in the midst of Ephesian enemies.* 2. *Christ Jesus is referred to as an Example of unshaken courage and fidelity to truth in the presence of death.*

III. THE CHARGE IS TO BE KEPT WITHOUT SPOT OR REPROACH TILL CHRIST'S SECOND COMING. "Until the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ." He was to be "faithful unto death," yea, even unto the second advent. 1. *It is according to apostolic usage to represent the end of Christian work as well as Christian expectation as terminating, not upon death, but upon the second advent.* The complete redemption will then be fully realized. 2. *It is not to be inferred from these words that the apostle expected the Lord's coming in his own lifetime.* The second Thessalonian Epistle, written many years before, dispels such an impression. The words in ver. 15, "in his own times," imply a long succession of cycles or changes. 3. *The second advent is to be brought about by God himself.* "Which in his own times he shall manifest, who is the blessed and only Potentate, King of kings, and Lord of lords." This picture of the Divine Majesty was designed to encourage Timothy, who might hereafter be summoned to appear before the little kings of earth, by the thought of the immeasurable glory of the Potentate before whose throne all men must stand in the final judgment. (1) He who is possessed of exhaustless powers and perfections is essentially immortal—"who only hath immortality"—because he is the Source of it in all who partake of it; for out of him all is death. (2) He has his dwelling in the glory of light ineffable—"dwelling in light unapproachable, whom no man ever saw or can see." (a) God is light (1 John i. 5). He covereth himself with light as with a garment (Ps. civ. 4); and he is the Fountain of light. (b) God is invisible. This is true, though "the pure in heart shall see God" (Matt. v. 8), and though it be that without holiness "no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. xii. 14). God is invisible (a) to the eye of sense, (b) but he will be visible to the believer in the clear intellectual vision of the supernatural state. 4. *All praise and honour are to be ascribed to God, to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.* The doxology is the natural ending of such a solemn charge.—T. C.

Vers. 17—19.—*A word of admonition and encouragement to the rich.* The counsel carries us back to what he had been saying in previous verses.

I. THE RICH ARE WARNED AGAINST A TWOFOLD DANGER. "To those who are rich in this present world give in charge not to be high-minded." It is implied that there were rich men as well as poor slaves in the Church at Ephesus. 1. *The danger of high-mindedness.* A haughty disposition is often engendered by wealth. The rich may be tempted to look down with contempt on the poor, as if they, forsooth, were the special favourites of Heaven because they had been so highly favoured with worldly substance. 2. *The danger of trusting in wealth.* "Nor to set their hope upon the uncertainty of riches." (1) It is a great risk for a rich man to say to gold, "Thou art my hope; and to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence" (Job xxxi. 24), (2) Our tenure of wealth is very uncertain. It is uncertain (a) because riches may take to themselves wings and flee away; (b) because we may be taken away by death

from the enjoyment of our possessions; (c) because riches cannot satisfy the deep hunger of the human heart. 3. *The safety of trusting in God.* "But upon the living God, who giveth us all things richly for enjoyment." (1) God is the sole Giver of all we possess. (2) He giveth to us all richly according to our need. (3) He giveth it for our enjoyment, so that we may take comfort in his rich provision. (4) As the living God, he is an unexhaustible Fountain of blessings, so that no uncertainty can ever attach to the supply.

II. THE RICH ARE ENCOURAGED TO MAKE A RIGHT USE OF THEIR WEALTH. 1. *"That they do good."* (1) Rich men may do evil to others by fraud or oppression, and evil to themselves by habits of luxury and intemperance. (2) *They are rather to abound in acts of beneficence to all men*, and especially to the household of faith, after the example of him who "went about every day doing good" (Acts x. 38). 2. *"Rich in good works,"* as if in opposition to the riches of this world. They are to abound in the doing of them, like Dorcas, who was "full of good works and almsdeeds." Wealth of this sort is the least disappointing both here and hereafter, and has no uncertainty in its results. 3. *"Ready to distribute."* Willing to give unasked; cheerful in the distribution of their favours; giving without grudging and without delay. 4. *"Willing to communicate."* As if to recognize, not merely a common humanity, but a common Christianity with the poor. The rich ought to share their possessions with the poor.

III. ENCOURAGEMENTS TO THE DISCHARGE OF THESE DUTIES. "Laying up in store for themselves as a treasure a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold upon the true life." 1. *It is possible for rich believers to lay up treasure in heaven.* This treasure is a foundation against the time to come. (1) Not a foundation of merit, for we are only saved by the merits of Christ; (2) but a foundation in heaven, solid, substantial, and durable—unlike uncertain riches of earth; good in its nature and results—unlike earthly riches, which often are the undoing of men. "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness" (Luke xvi. 9). 2. *Our riches may have an influence on our true life hereafter.* "That they may lay hold on the true life." (1) Not in the way of merit; (2) but in the way of grace, for the very rewards of the future are of grace; (3) the end of all our effort is the true life, in contrast to the vain, transitory, short-sighted life of earth.—T. C.

Vers. 20, 21.—*Concluding exhortation and benediction.* The parting counsel of the apostle goes back upon the substance of all his past counsels. It includes a positive and a negative counsel.

I. A POSITIVE COUNSEL. "O Timothy, keep the deposit" entrusted to thee. This refers to the doctrine of the gospel. It is "the faith once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). 1. *The doctrine of the gospel is thus not something discovered by man, but delivered to man.* 2. *It is placed in the hands of Timothy as a trustee, to be kept for the use of others.* It is a treasure in earthen vessels, to be jealously guarded against robbers and foes. 3. *If it is kept, it will in turn keep us.*

II. A NEGATIVE COUNSEL. "Avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of knowledge falsely so called: which some professing erred concerning the faith." 1. *The duty of turning away from empty discourses and the ideas of a false knowledge.* (1) Such things were utterly profitless as to spiritual result. (2) They were antagonistic to the doctrine of godliness; for they represented theories of knowledge put forth by false teachers, which ripened in due time into the bitter Gnosticism of later times. It was a knowledge that falsely attributed to itself that name, for it was based on ignorance or denial of God's truth. 2. *The danger of such teachings.* (1) Some members of the Church were led to profess such doctrines, perhaps because they were a seductive aspect of asceticism, or pretended to show a shorter cut to heaven. (2) But they lost their way and "erred concerning the faith." This false teaching undermined the true faith of the gospel. (3) As the tense implies an event that occurred in the past, these persons were not now in the communion of the Ephesian Church.—T. C.

Vers. 3.—*The health of religion.* "Wholesome words." There is no word more representative of the spirit of the gospel than this word "wholesome." It shows us that the gospel means health.

I. THEY ARE WHOLESOME BECAUSE THEY ARE HEALING WORDS. They heal breaches in families; they heal the division between God and the soul; they heal the heart itself. And in the *vade-mecum* of the Bible we find a cure for all the diseases of the inner man.

II. THEY ARE WHOLESOME WORDS AS CONTRASTED WITH OTHER LITERATURES. With much that is good in the best of authors, there is much that is harmful. All is not wholesome in Dante, or Goethe, or Shakespeare. It requires an infinite mind to inspire words that shall always and ever be wholesome; and it would be difficult to speak of any human literature that is wholesome every way. Some has in it too much romance and sentiment; some has too great a power upon the passions; some feeds the intellect and starves the heart.

III. THESE WORDS ARE WHOLESOME IN EVERY SPHERE. It is not too much to say of the gospel of Jesus Christ that it saves and sanctifies body, soul, and spirit. It has no word of encouragement to the unwashed monk, or to the ascetic who neglects the care of the body. It supplies a true culture to the mind, and feeds and nourishes all the graces of the heart. So it becomes a doctrine according to godliness.—W. M. S.

Ver. 6.—*The wealth of religion.* "But godliness with contentment is great gain." We learn from these words—

I. THAT MEN ARE RICH IN WHAT THEY ARE. It is a mistake to think of riches as belonging merely to the estate. We may catalogue the possessions of the outward life, but they are only "things." How many men learn too late that they are not rich in what they have! Godliness is the truest riches, because it is God-likeness; the image which no earthly artist can produce! The highest good conceivable is to be like God.

II. MEN ARE RICH IN WHAT THEY CAN DO WITHOUT. "With contentment." Let us study, not so much what we may secure, as what we are able to enjoy existence without. Men multiply their cares often as they multiply their means; and some men, with competency in a cottage, have not been sorry that they lost a palace. "Contentment is great gain;" it sets the mind free from anxious care; it prevents the straining after false effect; it has more time to enjoy the flowers at its feet, instead of straining to secure the meadows of the far-away estate.

III. MEN MUST LEAVE EVERYTHING; THEY CAN CARRY NOTHING AWAY. *That* is certain; and yet the word must be read thoughtfully. Nothing save conscience and character and memory. Still the words are true, that we can carry nothing out; for these are not "things," but part of our personality. The body returns to the dust, but the spirit—to the God who gave it. Let this check all undue anxiety, and cure our foolish envy as we look around upon all the coveted positions of men. "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out."—W. M. S.

Vers. 1—10.—*Slaves and heretics.* I. DUTIES OF CHRISTIAN SLAVES. 1. *Toward unbelieving masters.* "Let as many as are servants under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the Name of God and the doctrine be not blasphemed." Paul had to legislate for a social condition which was, to a considerable extent, different from ours. In the early Christian Churches there were not a few whose social condition was that of slaves. They are pointed to here as being under the yoke as servants. To service there was added the oppressive circumstance of being under the yoke. That is, they were like cattle with the yoke on them—having no rights, any more than cattle, to bestow their labour where they liked, but only where their masters liked. It was a degradation of human beings, for which no apology could be made. Under Christianity the eyes of Christian slaves could not be altogether closed to the flagrant injustice inflicted on them. They would also see that, in this sonship and heirship of glory, they were really exalted above unbelieving masters. It would have been easy, with such materials, to have inflamed their minds against their masters. But Paul, as a wise legislator, understood better the obligations of Christianity. No inflammatory word does he address to them; he tells them, not of rights, but of duties. Their masters, notwithstanding their being identified with injustice, were still *their own* masters, *i.e.* men to whom in the providence of God they were subordinated. Let them be counted worthy of all honour, even as he has already said that the presbyters, or ecclesiastical rulers, are to be counted worthy of honour. And we need not wonder at this; for still,

at the basis of things, they are the representatives of Divine authority. As such—and who are wholly entitled to be called worthy representatives?—let them be counted worthy of all proper honour. Let them be treated thus, *that the Name of God and the doctrine be not blasphemed*. There was involved in their conduct the Name of God, *i.e.* of the true God, as distinguished from the false gods which their masters worshipped. There was also involved the teaching, *i.e.* what Christianity taught about things. If they were insubordinate, both would be evil spoken of. The heathen masters would think of Christianity as upturning the fundamental relations of things. We are apt to forget how much the Divine honour is involved in our conduct. We should give such a living representation of our religion as will give none occasion to blaspheme. 2. *Toward believing masters*. "And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but let them serve them the rather, because they that partake of the benefit are believing and beloved." Men might be despotic masters, holders of slaves, and yet be Christians, their conscience not being educated upon that point. It was not said to them that they were to go and liberate their slaves. It was better that they should receive the essence of Christianity without their prejudices being raised on that point; correction on it, from the working of Christian influences, was sure to follow, with a slowness, however, that might leave many unlightened of that generation of them. It seems to be implied that, though unlightened, they gave their slaves Christian treatment, *i.e.* treated them as not under the yoke, in the avoidance of harshness and unreasonable exactions often associated with the yoke. This was rightly to be interpreted as a homage rendered to brotherhood in Christ. But let not slaves be led into a mistaken interpretation of brotherhood. It did not mean that respect was no longer due to their masters. The earthly relation, though not so deep as the new relation in Christ, still stood, as giving form to duty. Let them not despise them, *i.e.* refuse the respect due to superiors. And, instead of giving them less service, let it be the other way. Give more service, because they that get the benefit of it are of the same faith, and beloved as masters that have learned from Christ the law of kindness. *Emphasizing what has been said*. "These things teach and exhort." There was to be both direction and enforcement.

II. HERETICS. 1. *Standard in relation to which they are heretics*. "If any man teacheth a different doctrine, and consenteth not to sound words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness." The other doctrine is that which departs from the standard. This is contained in the words of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Truth, and has the right to rule all minds. There is a healthy vigour in his words, not the sickliness that there was in the words of the heretical teachers. The doctrine contained in the words of our Lord Jesus Christ is that which is *according to godliness*. There is grounded in our nature, apart from all teachings, a certain *religiosity*. That is, we are made to have certain states of our soul toward God, such as reverence. As we cherish these states we are pious, godly. What our Lord taught was in accordance with the *norm* of godliness in our original constitution, and was fitted to effect godliness as a result. The condemnation of the heretics was, that in not consenting to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ they were going away to doctrines which were not fitted to promote piety. 2. *Moral characterization*. (1) *From the inflatedness of ignorance*. "He is puffed up, knowing nothing." It is only in Christ that we have the *right point of view*. If, therefore, we are not taught by him, we know nothing aright. Those who have true knowledge are humbled under a sense of what they do not know. The heretics who had not even a smattering of true knowledge were puffed up with conceit of the multitude of things which they knew. (2) *From the morbidness of sophistry*. "But doting about questionings and disputes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, wranglings of men corrupted in mind and bereft of the truth." Not consenting to sound words, they have diseased action. That in which they show themselves diseased is in busying themselves, not, like Christian inquirers, around realities, but, like the sophists with whom Socrates had to do, around questionings which become disputes of words. This disease of hair-splitting is attended with various evil consequences: envy toward those who evince superior skill, strife with those who will not admit the value of the distinctions, railings where there is not reason, evil surmisings where there is not charity, and frequent and more bitter collisions where the truth, not honestly dealt with, is forcibly

taken away. 3. *The special obnoxiousness of their teaching.* (1) *This was in asserting that godliness was a way of gain.* "Supposing that godliness is a way of gain." This was evidently a stratagem on the part of the heretics. Suspected of a worldliness that was unbecoming their religious pretensions, they got over it by taking up the position that godliness was a gainful trade. They appealed to men to be religious for the sake of the worldly gain it would bring to them. It can be seen that the apostle regards the heretical maxim with contempt. It is a maxim from which many act who would not like to admit it in words. They keep up religious appearances, not because they have any love for religion, but because it would be damaging to them to appear irreligious. (2) *Godliness is a way of gain if associated with contentment.* "But godliness with contentment is great gain." "Elegantly, and not without ironical correction to a sense that is contrary, he gives a new turn to the same words" (Calvin). Godliness (what we have in relation to God) is great gain; but its gain lies in its producing a contented mind (in relation to ourselves). Where a man is contented it is as though he owned the whole world. (3) *Reasons for contentment. Our natural bareness.* "For we brought nothing into the world, for neither can we carry anything out." The same thought is expressed in Job i. 21 and in Eccles. v. 15. Viewed at two points we are absolutely poor. There was a time when earthly good was not ours, and there will come a time when it will cease to be ours. We are not, then, to make an *essential* of what only pertains to our earthly state. *We can do with little.* "But having food and covering we shall be therewith content." Something added to our bare natural condition we need while we are in this world, and it will not be wanting; but it does not need to be much. Food and covering, these will suffice for us. We can do with less than we imagine. Shakespeare tells us that

"The poorest man
Is in the poorest thing superfluous,
Demands for nature more than nature claims."

"The rock of our present day is that no one knows how to live upon little; the great men of antiquity were generally poor. The retrenchment of useless expenditure, the laying aside of what one may call the *relatively necessary*, is the high-road to Christian disentanglement of heart, just as it was to that of ancient vigour. *A great-soul in a small house is the idea* which has always touched me more than any other" (Lacordaire). *The sad result of the opposite state.* "But they that desire to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition." By them that desire to be rich we are to understand those who, instead of being contented with what they can enjoy with God's blessing and what they can use for God's glory, make riches their object in life. They fall into a state of mind that is *seductive* and *fettering*. And this unnatural craving for possession does not stand alone, but has many affiliated lusts, such as love for display, love for worldly company, love for the pleasures of the table. Of these no rational account can be given, and they are hurtful even to the extent of drowning men in misery, expressed by two very strong words—destruction and perdition. *Confirmation of the last reason. Proverbial saying.* "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil." The proverb is intended to have a certain *startling* nature. Desire of money is not certainly the only root of evils, but it is conspicuously the root of evils. We need only think of the lies, thefts, oppressions, jealousies, murders, wars, lawsuits, sensuality, prayerlessness, that have been caused by it. *The victims.* "Which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows." The apostle thinks of the ravages wrought on some he knew. Within the Christian circle, they unlawfully reached after gain. This led to their wandering from the faith, and to their being pierced through, as with a sword, with many sorrows; bitter reflections on the past, disappointment with what they had obtained, apprehensions of the future. These he would point to as *beacons*, warning off the rock of avarice.—R. F.

Vers. 11—16.—*The Christian gladiator.* The gladiator was one who fought, in the arena, at the amphitheatre of an ancient city, such as the Colosseum at Rome, for the amusement of the public. It made life real and earnest to be compelled to enter the lists, in which the issue was generally victory or death.

“And now
 The arena swims around him—he is gone?
 Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hailed the wretch who won.
 He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
 Were with his heart, and that was far away;
 He recked not of the life he lost or prize,
 But where his rude hut by the Danube lay;
 There were his young barbarians all at play—
 There was their Dacian mother! he, their sire,
 Butchered to make a Roman holiday.”

I. NEED OF PREPARATION. “But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.” We know what can be undergone by men of the lowest order, when they put themselves in training for entering the prize-ring. Accustomed to spend the greater part of their time in the public-house, they are found rigorously foregoing their pleasures and entailing upon themselves hard employment. In what these pugilists forego and endure, do they not put to blush many Christians, who cannot be said to forego much, or to give hard service for their religion? There is, we are here taught, what becomes the man of God, *i.e.* the highest type of man—the man who tries to work out the Divine idea of his life and to come to be God-like in his character. “O man of God, learn from these men of a low order. They flee their wonted pleasures; flee thou,” says the apostle in earnest address, “these things,” *i.e.* as appears from the context, those habits of mind which we call *worldly*, tendencies to sink higher things in the pursuit of worldly ends, money, enjoyment, position for ourselves, and for our children. Christians who may have no taste for what are regarded as coarse pleasures, may yet be worldly in their ideas and habits. Such worldliness is unworthy of the man of God; vulgar, demeaning in him. O man of God, flee thou worldliness, as thou wouldst a wild beast. Flee it, as certain to eat up thy true manliness. It may be said that more havoc has been wrought in the Church by worldliness than by intemperance. And the one is not so easily dealt with as the other. The intemperate man may be laid hold on, and aided out of his intemperance. But the worldly man may be in position in the Church; and who is likely to succeed in aiding him out of his worldliness? And so, while the one may be rescued, the other may continue to be the prey of destructive habits that are growing upon him. The other side of duty refers to the acquiring of good habits of mind that are required for the fight. And as the word for worldly habits is *flee*, so the word for good habits is *pursue*. It is implied that worldliness seeks us, and we need to get out of its way, to flee from it as from a wild beast. Good habits, on the other hand, retreat from us; they are apt to evade us, and we need to pursue them with all the keenness with which a ravenous wild beast pursues its prey. It is hard for us to come up to them, and to have them as our enjoyed possession. The good habits, so ill to grasp, which are needed for the fight by the man of God are *particularized*. First of all he must have *righteousness*, or the habit of *going by rule*. And along with this he must have *godliness*, or the habit of *referring to God*. Then he must have *faith*, which covers his *defencelessness*. Along with this he must have *love*, which supplies him with *fire*. He must also have *patience*, which enables him to *hold out to the end*. And along with this he must have *meekness*, which makes his spirit *proof against all accumulation of wrong*. In the eye of the world, these habits may seem *unmanly*; but, O man of God, be true to thyself, and pursue them; let them not escape from thee; by God’s decree they shall reward thy eager pursuit.

II. NATURE OF THE FIGHT. “Fight the good fight of the faith.” He that has the faith of a Christian is necessitated to fight. There is revealed to his faith a God in the heavens, who hates sin, and who also seeks the salvation of souls. In the light of this, which ought to be an increasing light, there is presented an *exposure*. He comes to see that there are in his flesh tendencies which are against God. He comes also to see that there is in the world, in its opinion and custom, much that is against God. As, then, he would *stand by God*, he must fight against the flesh and the world—against what would tempt to sin, from within and from without. It is a good fight, being for the cause of God, which is also the cause of man in his establishment in righteousness and love. It is a good fight, being grounded in the victory of Christ and carried on

hopefully under his leadership. It is a fight into which the man of God can throw his undivided energies, his warmest enthusiasm. Many a fight which receives the plaudits of men has, in the strict review, only a seeming or superficial goodness. But the fight into which the man of God throws himself can stand the severest tests of goodness. Be it thine, then, O man of God, to fight the good fight of the faith.

III. THE PRICELESS PRIZE. "Lay hold on the life eternal, whereunto thou wast called, and didst confess the good confession in the sight of many witnesses." The prize for which the gladiator fought was not all unsubstantial. It was *life*. It meant the enjoyment of liberty, return to his rude hut, his young barbarians, and their "Dacian mother." Still that life had in it elements of unsatisfactoriness and decay. It was savage life, below the level of civilized life. Such as it was in its rude delights, it was not beyond accident and death. But the prize for which the Christian gladiator fights, is *life eternal*. This is not to be confounded with *perpetuity of existence*, which may be felt to be an intolerable burden. The importance of existence lies in its joyous elements, experience of healthful activity, and of communion with those we love. So the life, which is here presented as the prize, is that kind of existence in which there is a free, unrestrained play of our powers, and in which we have communion with the Father of our spirits and with the spirits of the just. And the life has such a principle in it, such subsistence in the living God, as to be placed above the reach of death, as only to be brought forth into all its joyousness by death. The counsel of the apostle is to lay hold on this priceless prize. O man of God, do not let it escape thee. Stretch forward to it with a feeling of its *supreme desirableness*. It is worthy of all the strain to which thou canst put thyself. The counsel of the apostle is supported by a reference to a marked period in the past—apparently entrance on the Christian life, or that which was expressive of it to Timothy, viz. *his baptism*. It was a period in which Divine action and human action met. It was God calling him to life eternal. It was at the same time Timothy confessing a good confession—apparently saying that life eternal was his aim. Come persecution, come death, life eternal he would seek to gain. This confession he made in the sight of many witnesses, present on the occasion of his baptism, who could speak to the earnestness of spirit with which he entered on his Christian career. O man of God, fight, remembering thy Divine calling and thy solemn engagements.

IV. THE WITNESSES. "I charge thee in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and of Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed the good confession; that thou keep the commandment, without spot, without reproach." The *many witnesses* just mentioned call up such a scene as was to be witnessed in the Colosseum. There was an assemblage of eighty-seven thousand people, tier above tier all round. As the gladiator stepped into the arena, he might well be awed by so vast and unwonted a crowd. But this would quickly give way to the feeling of what depended on the way in which he quitted himself. And there would not be absent from his mind the thought of the applause which would reward a victory. O man of God, thou art now in the arena, and there are many onlookers. They are watching how thou art quitting thyself in the fight of the faith—whether thou art realizing the seriousness of thy position, thy splendid opportunity. Their approval is worthy of being considered, worthy of being coveted by thee, and should help to nerve thee to the fight. But there was one pre-eminent personage who was expected to grace a Roman gladiatorial festival, viz. the emperor. As the gladiator entered, his eye would rest on the emperor and his attendants. And he would have a peculiar feeling in being called upon to fight under the eye of the august Cæsar, to whom he would look up as to a very god. So, O man of God, there is one great Personage who is looking down on the arena in which thou art, and under whose eye thou art called upon to fight. It is not a Cæsar—a man born and upheld and mortal like other men; but it is God, who *quickeneth all things*—the Substratum of all created existence, the almighty Upholder of men, the almighty Upholder of the universe with all its forms of life. There is another Personage, and yet not another. This is *Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed the good confession*. "Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a King then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a King. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness of the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." "In these words we see the majesty and fearless exposure of Jesus.

'I cannot and will not deny that I am a King. It is my office to declare the truth; it is by the influence of truth that I am to reign in the hearts of men, and I cannot shrink from asserting this most important truth, that I have the power and authority of a sovereign at once to rule and to defend my people. Let not this doctrine offend. Every one who is of the truth, who loves the light, and whose mind is open to conviction, heareth and acknowledgeth this and all my doctrines.' These words, spoken at so interesting and trying a period, discover to us the elevation of our Saviour in a very striking light. We see his mind unbroken by suffering. We see in him the firmest adherence to the doctrines he had formerly taught. We see in him a conscious dignity, a full conviction of the glory and power with which he was invested. He asserts his royal office, not from ostentation, not amidst a host of flatterers, but in the face of enemies; and when he made this solemn declaration his appearance bore little conformity, indeed, to the splendour of earthly monarchs." There is a difference between the good confession of Timothy and the good confession of Christ indicated in the language. Timothy confessed his good confession, *i.e.* in the way of saying beforehand what he would do in the trial. Christ witnessed his good confession, *i.e.* authenticated it by making it in the immediate prospect of death. He went forth from Pilate's judgment-hall and sealed his confession with his blood. He was thus the first and greatest of confessors. It adds much in the way of *definiteness*, that we can thus think of him. It also adds much in the way of *bracing*. There is a halo around the great Onlooker from his past. The presence in a battle of the hero of a hundred fights, of a Napoleon or Wellington, is worth some additional battalions. So, O man of God, be braced up to the fight, by the thought that thou art fighting under the eye of thy God, under the eye of thy Saviour. And do not think of getting the prize surreptitiously, but only by fair means, keeping to the rules of the contest, what is here called *keeping the commandment*, so that no little spot is made on it, no little dishonour done to it. For, however little, it means so much taken away from the value of the prize. I charge thee, then, says the apostle, in these great presences keep the commandment.

V. FINAL EVENT. "Until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: which in its own times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power eternal. Amen." The final event of the day, on the occasion of a great gladiatorial show, was the coming forward of Cæsar, in circumstances of pomp, to crown, or otherwise reward, the victors. So the final event of time will be the coming forward of our Lord Jesus Christ (as from looking on) to crown the victors in the good fight of the faith. There is reference to the same event in 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. It would be the proudest moment of a man's life when he was called forth to receive the prize from the hand of his emperor. So it will be a moment of greatest satisfaction to the believer when he is called forth (as by the herald proclaiming his name before a great assemblage) to receive the crown from the hand of his Lord. He will not certainly be filled with self-satisfaction. He will feel that he is only a debtor to Christ, and his first impulse will be to cast his crown at the feet of his great Benefactor. This appearing God is to show, *i.e.* to effect and to bring forth into view. He is to show it in its own times—at present hidden, but clear to the mind of God, and to be shown when his purposes are ripe. He who is to effect the appearing is appropriately adored as the Potentate (the Wielder of power). Not less appropriately is he adored as the blessed or (better) the happy Potentate, *i.e.* self-happy, having all elements of happiness within himself, no void within his infinite existence to fill up, but not therefore disposed to keep happiness to himself, rather prompted, in his own experience of happiness, to bestow it on others, first in creation and then in redemption. It is the happy Wielder of power that is to bring about an event that is fraught with so much happiness to believers. He *shall* show it, for he is the only Potentate; none can dispute the name with him. There are *powers* under him as there were rulers, with different names, under the emperor; but he is the King of kings and Lord of lords—sovereign Disposer of all human and angelic representatives of power. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of water: he turns it [however impetuous] whithersoever he will." He shall show it in its *own times*; for, however distant those times, he shall live to do it, being the only One who hath

immortality from himself, essential imperviousness to decay. He shall show it, who is himself *inaccessible* within a circle of light, and not only never seen by men but necessarily invisible to men, *i.e.* in the unveiled brightness of his glory. All honour and power eternal, then, be to this God. We may judge of what the appearing is to be that is to be effected by One in whose praise the apostle breaks forth in so lofty a strain. We may conclude that it is to be the grandest display of the honour and power of God. And what a privilege that the humble believer—victor in the battle of life—is to be called forth before an assembled universe, under the presidency of Christ and by the hand of Christ, to be crowned with the life eternal! Let every one add his *Amen* to the ascription of honour and power to God, as displayed in the appearing of Christ.—R. F.

Vers. 17—21.—*Parting words.* I. WARNING TO THE RICH. "Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not high-minded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy." The apostle's fear of worldliness in the Church still possesses him. He does not now regard those who *wish* to be rich, but those who *are* rich. He at once reminds them of the relative value of their riches, as extending only to this present world. He warns them against the danger of being high-minded, *i.e.* lifted up above others under a sense of their importance on account of their riches. He warns them also against the kindred danger, which separates, not so much from men as from God, viz. their setting their hope on their riches. "Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answered again, and said unto them, "Children, how hard is it for them that *trust* in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!" The difficulty of the rich is that they are tempted to set their hope on their riches. One reason for their not doing so, is that their hope should not be set on an uncertainty such as riches is. The true Object of our hope is God, who is of a liberal disposition. He giveth us not merely the necessities of life, but he giveth us *richly all things*. In his disposition we have a better guarantee for our not wanting, than in clutching to any riches. He giveth us things to enjoy, not to draw us away from our fellow-men, not to draw us away from himself, but to enjoy as his gifts, through which he would tell us of the kindness of his heart.

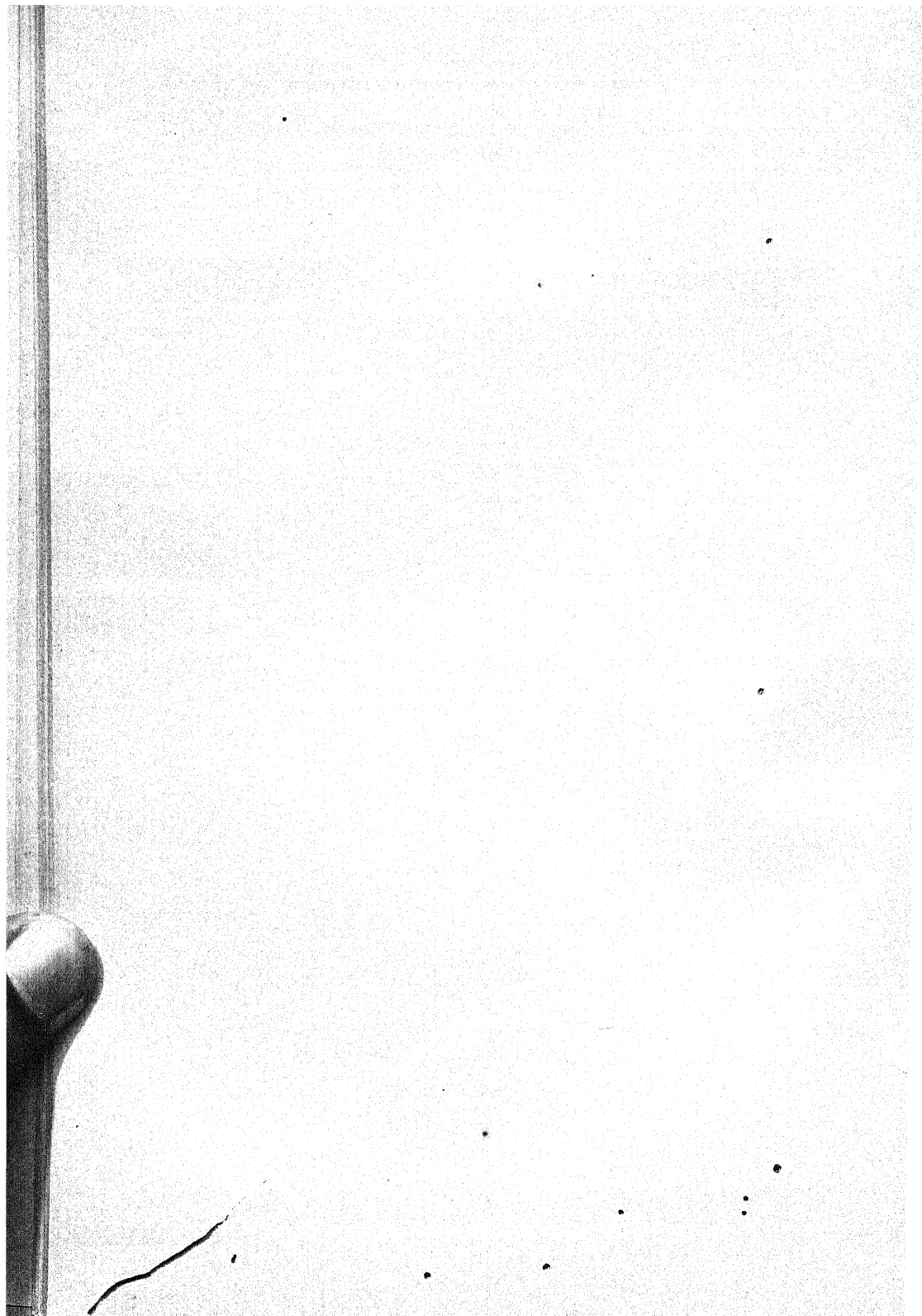
II. THE RIGHT COURSE FOR THEM. "That they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate." They were to seek to promote the happiness of others. As they were rich, they had it in their power, above others, to do *beautiful* actions. They were to be free in making distribution of what they had. They were to be ready to admit others to share with them. In a word, they were to counteract worldly habits of mind by cultivating habits of benevolence. There is the duty of giving the Lord the firstfruits of our substance, a proportion of our income; there is here inculcated the cultivation of the disposition toward others that is to go along with that.

III. ADVANTAGE OF THE RIGHT COURSE. "Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed." What they took from their plenty and gave for others they were not to lose, but were to have it as a treasure laid up for them. "Their estates will not die with them, but they will have joy and comfort of them in the other world, and have cause to bless God for them to all eternity" (Beveridge). The treasure is thought of as a good foundation, by resting on which they would lay hold on the life which was life indeed. The time is coming when this world will be taken away from beneath our feet. What have we sent before us into the next world, so as to keep us from sinking in the new condition of things, to bear us up so that we shall not earn, but receive, from Christ's hand and through Christ's merit, the life indeed? The answer here is—what we have denied ourselves, what we have unselfishly sacrificed for others.

IV. CONCLUDING EARNEST ADDRESS TO TIMOTHY. I. *What he was to keep.* "O Timothy, guard that which is committed unto thee." The *deposit* is the doctrine delivered to Timothy to preach, as opposed to what follows. "We have an exclamation alike of foreknowledge and of fondness. For he foresaw future errors, which he mourned over beforehand. What does he mean by guarding the deposit? Guard it, says he, on

account of thieves, on account of enemies who while men sleep may sow tares amidst the good seed. What is the deposit? It is that which was entrusted to thee, not found by thee; which thou hast received, not invented; a matter, not of genius, but of teaching; not of private usurpation, but of public tradition; a matter brought to thee, not put forth by thee; in which thou oughtest to be, not an enlarger, but a guardian; not an originator, but a disciple; not leading, but following. Keep, saith he, the deposit; preserve intact and inviolate *the talent of the catholic faith*. What has been entrusted to thee, let the same remain with thee; let that same be handed down by thee. Gold thou hast received, gold return. I should be sorry thou shouldst substitute ought else. I should be sorry that for gold thou shouldst substitute lead, impudently, or brass, fraudulently. I do not want the mere appearance of gold, but its actual reality. Not that there is to be no progress in religion, in Christ's Church. Let there be so by all means, and the greatest progress; but, then, let it be real progress, not a change of faith. Let the intelligence of the whole Church and its individual members increase exceedingly, provided it be only on its own head, the doctrine being still the same." 2. *What he was to avoid*. "Turning away from the profane babblings and oppositions of the knowledge which is falsely so called; which some professing have erred concerning the faith." The errors are called profane babblings, similarly to the characterization of them in ch. i. 6 and iv. 7. They are also called oppositions of a falsely named *gnosis*, i.e. to the true *gnosis* in the gospel. There were some defections on account of *Gnostic* tendencies even in the apostle's day; and it was very much the design of this letter to warn his pupil against them.

V. BENEDICTION. "Grace be with you." It seems better to regard the benediction for Timothy alone. He has been so busy in laying down ecclesiastical rules for the direction of Timothy as superintendent, that he has no space left for personal references, but closes abruptly with the briefest form of benediction.—R. F.



HOMILETICAL INDEX

TO

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL TO TIMOTHY.

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THE
PULPIT COMMENTARY,

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II. TIMOTHY.

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Homilies by Various Authors:

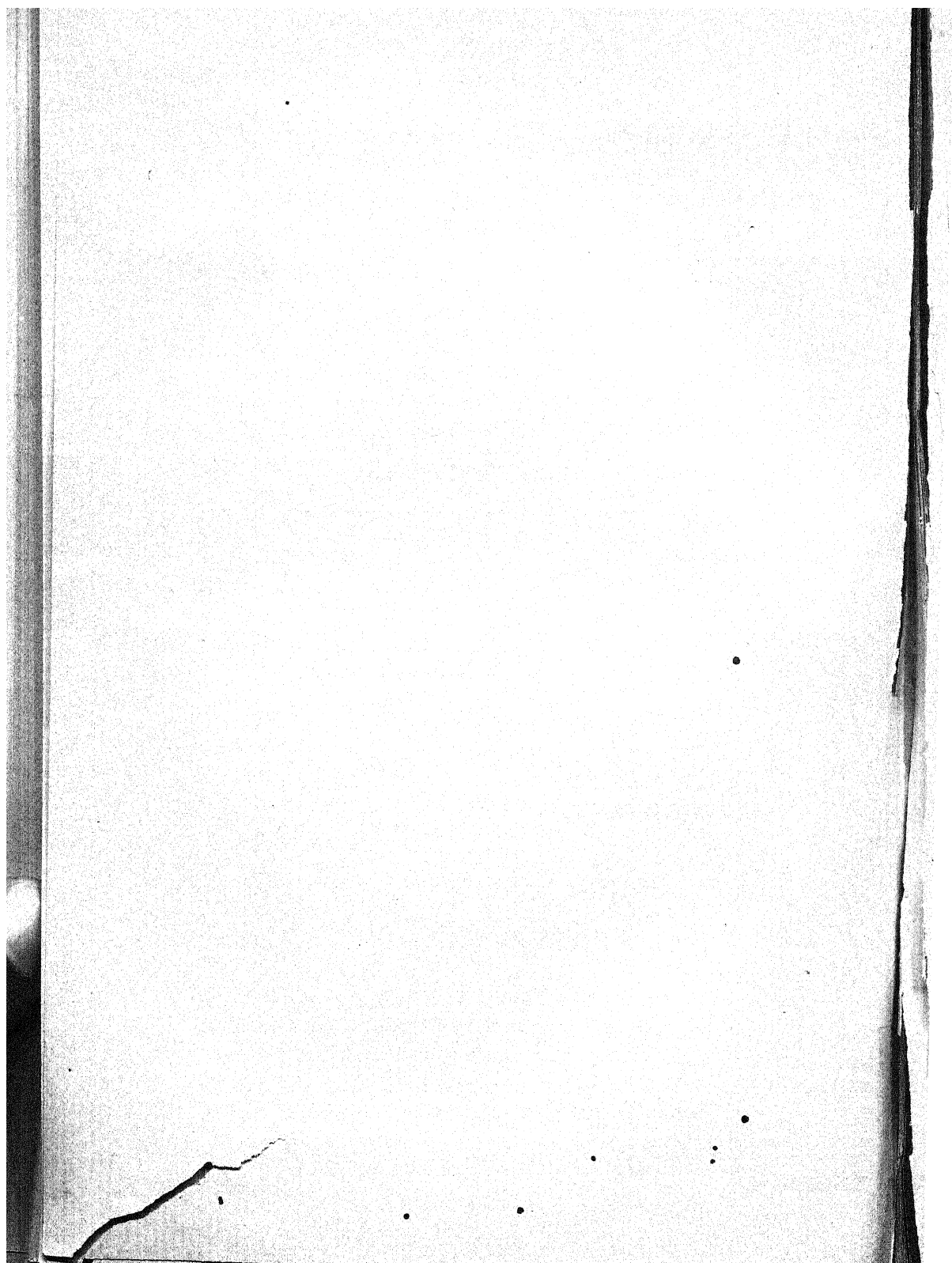
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THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY.

EXPOSITION.

CHAPTER I.

Ver. 1.—*Christ Jesus for Jesus Christ, A.V. and T.R.; the life for life, A.V.* The life is a little clearer than *life*, as showing that “life” (not “promise”) is the antecedent to “which.” According to the promise denotes the subject-matter with which, as an apostle, he had to deal, viz. the promise of eternal life in Christ Jesus, and the end for which he was called, viz. to preach that promise (comp. Titus i. 2).

Ver. 2.—*Beloved child for dearly beloved son, A.V.; peace for and peace, A.V. My beloved child.* In 1 Tim. i. 2 (as in Titus i. 4) it is “my true child,” or “my own son,” A.V. The idea broached by some commentators, that this variation in expression marks some change in St. Paul’s confidence in Timothy, seems utterly unfounded. The exhortations to boldness and courage which follow were the natural results of the danger in which St. Paul’s own life was, and the depression of spirits caused by the desertion of many friends (ch. iv. 10–16). St. Paul, too, knew that the time was close at hand when Timothy, still young, would no longer have him to lean upon and look up to, and therefore would prepare him for it; and possibly he may have seen some symptoms of weakness in Timothy’s character, which made him anxious, as appears, indeed, in the course of this Epistle. *Grace, etc.* (so 1 Tim. i. 2; Titus i. 4, A.V.; 2 John 3). Jude has “mercy, peace, and love.” The salutation in Eph. i. 2 is “grace and peace,” as also in Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 3, and elsewhere in St. Paul’s Epistles, and in Rev. i. 4.

Ver. 3.—*In a pure for with pure, A.V.; how unceasing for that without ceasing, A.V.; is my remembrance for I have remembrance, A.V.; supplications for prayers, A.V.* For whom I serve from my fathers in a pure conscience, comp. Acts xxiii. 1. How un-
II. TIMOTHY.

ceasing, etc. The construction of the sentence which follows is difficult and ambiguous. For what does the apostle give thanks to God? The answer to this question will give the clue to the explanation. The only thing mentioned in the context which seems a proper subject of thanksgiving is that which is named in ver. 5, viz. the “unfeigned faith” that was in Timothy. That this was a proper subject of thanksgiving we learn from Eph. i. 15, where St. Paul writes that, having heard of their faith in the Lord Jesus, he ceased not to give thanks for them, making mention of them in his prayers (see, too, 1 Thess. i. 2). Assuming, then, that this was the subject of his thanksgiving, we notice especially the reading of the R.T., λαβών, “having received,” and the note of Bengel that *ἀπομνησιν λαμβάνειν* means to be reminded of any one by another, as distinguished from *ἀνμνησιν*, which is used when any one comes to your recollection without external prompting; both which fall in with our previous conclusion. And we get for the main sentence the satisfactory meaning: “I give thanks to God that I have received (or, because I have received) a most pleasant reminder (from some letter or visitor to which he does not further allude) of your unfeigned faith,” etc. The main sentence clearly is: “I thank God . . . having been reminded of the unfeigned faith that is in thee.” The intermediate words are, in Paul’s manner, parenthetical and explanatory. Being about to say that it was at some special remembrance of Timothy’s faith that he gave thanks, the thought arose in his mind that there was a continual remembrance of him day and night in his prayers; that he was ever thinking of him, longing to see him, and to have the tears shed at their parting turned into joy at their meeting again. And so he interposes this thought, and prefaces it with *ἐς*—not

surely, "how," as in the R.V., but in the sense of *καθώς*, "as," "just as." And so the whole passage comes out: "Just as I have an unceasing remembrance of you in my prayers, day and night, longing to see you, that the tears which I remember you shed at our parting may be turned into joy, so do I give special thanks to God on the remembrance of your faith."

Ver. 4.—*Longing for greatly desiring*, A.V.; *remembering for being mindful of*, A.V.

Ver. 5.—*Having been reminded of for when I call to remembrance*, A.V.; *in thee for that in thee*, A.V. *Unfeigned* (*ἀνυπόκριτος*); as 1 Tim. i. 5 (see also Rom. xii. 9; 2 Cor. vi. 6; 1 Pet. i. 22; Jas. iii. 17). *Having been reminded*, etc. (see preceding note). Thy grandmother Lois. *Μάμμη* properly corresponds exactly to our word "mamma." In 4 Macc. xvi. 9, *Οὐ μάμμη κληθεῖσα μακαρισθήσεται*, "I shall never be called a happy grandmother," and here (the only place where it is found in the New Testament) it has the sense of "grandmother." It is hardly a real word, and has no place in Stephens' *Thes.*, except incidentally by comparison with *πάππα*. It has, however, a classical usage. The proper word for a "grandmother" is *τήθη*. Lois; a name not found elsewhere, possibly meaning "good," or "excellent," from the same root as *ἀεῖρετος* and *λάϊστος*. This and the following Eunice are examples of the frequent use of Greek or Latin names by Jews. Eunice, we know from Acts xvi. 1, was a Jewess and a Christian, as it would seem her mother Lois was before her.

Ver. 6.—*For the which cause for wherefore*, A.V.; *through the laying for by the putting*, A.V. *For which cause* (*δι' ἣν αἰτίαν*); so ver. 12 and Titus i. 13, but nowhere else in St. Paul's Epistles, though common elsewhere. The clause seems to depend upon the words immediately preceding, "I am persuaded in thee also; for which cause," etc. Stir up (*ἀναστυπεῖν*); here only in the New Testament, but found in the LXX. of Gen. xlv. 27 and 1 Macc. xiii. 7, in an intransitive sense, "to revive." In both passages it is contrasted with a previous state of despondency (Gen. xlv. 26) or fear (1 Macc. xiii. 2). We must, therefore, conclude that St. Paul knew Timothy to be cast down and depressed by his own imprisonment and imminent danger, and therefore exhorted him to revive "the spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind," which was given him at his ordination. The metaphor is taken from kindling slumbering ashes into a flame by the bellows, and the force of *ἀνα* is to show that the embers had gone down from a previous state of candescence or flame—"to rekindle, light up again." It is a favourite metaphor in classical Greek. The gift of

God (*τὸ χάρισμα τοῦ Θεοῦ*); as 1 Tim. iv. 14 (where see note). *The laying on of my hands*, together with those of the presbytery (1 Tim. iv. 14; comp. Acts xiii. 2, 3). The laying on of hands was also the medium through which the Holy Ghost was given in Confirmation (Acts viii. 17), and in healing (Mark xvi. 18; comp. Numb. xxvii. 18, 23).

Ver. 7.—*Gave us not for hath not given us*, A.V.; *a spirit of fearfulness for the spirit of fear*, A.V.; *and for of*, A.V.; *discipline for of a sound mind*, A.V. A spirit of fearfulness; or, cowardice, as the word *δειλία* exactly means in classical Greek, where it is very common, though it only occurs here in the New Testament. *Δειλός* also has a reproachful sense, both in classical Greek, and also in the LXX., and in the New Testament (see Matt. viii. 26; Mark iv. 40; Rev. xxi. 8). It seems certain, therefore, that St. Paul thought that Timothy's gentle spirit was in danger of being cowed by the adversaries of the gospel. The whole tenor of his exhortation, combined as it was with words of warm affection, is in harmony with this thought. Compare with the phrase, *πνεῦμα δειλίας*, the *πνεῦμα δουλείας* *eis φόβον* of Rom. viii. 15. Of power and love. Power (*δύναμις*) is emphatically the attribute of the Holy Spirit (Luke iv. 14; Acts x. 38; Rom. xv. 13; 1 Cor. ii. 4, etc.), and that which he specially imparts to the servants of Christ (Acts i. 8; vi. 8; Eph. iii. 16, etc.). Love is added, as showing that the servant of Christ always uses power in conjunction with love, and only as the means of executing what love requires. Discipline (*σωφρονισμός*); only here in the New Testament; *σωφρονίζω* is found in Titus ii. 4, "to teach," A.V.; "to train," R.V. "Discipline" is not a very happy rendering, though it gives the meaning; "correction," or "sound instruction," is perhaps nearer. It would seem that Timothy had shown some signs of weakness, and had not boldly reproved and instructed in their duty certain offenders, as true love for souls required him to do. The phrase from Plutarch's *Life of Cato*, quoted by Alford, exactly gives the force of *σωφρονισμός*: *Ἐπὶ διορθώσει καὶ σωφρονισμῷ τῶν ἄλλων*, "For the amendment and correction of the rest."

Ver. 8.—*Be not ashamed therefore for be not thou therefore ashamed*, A.V.; *suffer hardship with the gospel for be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel*, A.V. *Be not ashamed*, etc. The exhortation based upon the previous statement. The spirit of power and love must show itself in a brave, unflinching acceptance of all the hardships and afflictions incident to a faithful execution of his episcopal office (comp. Rom. i. 16). *Suffer hardship with the gospel*. This, of course, is a possible rendering, but an un-

natural one, and not at all in harmony with the context. The force of *σὺν ἐν συγκοπήσῃ* (only found here in the New Testament and in the R.T. of ch. ii. 3) is manifestly to associate Timothy with St. Paul in the afflictions of the gospel. "Be a fellow-partaker with me of the afflictions," which is in obvious contrast with being ashamed of the testimony of the Lord and of the apostle his prisoner. *The gospel* (τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ); i.e. for the gospel, as Phil. i. 27, "striving for the faith of the gospel" (τῇ πίστει), and as Chrysostom explains it: "τὸ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου" (Huther). According to the power of God; either "according to that spirit of power which God gave you at your ordination," or "according to the mighty power of God manifested in our salvation and in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ." The latter seems to be what St. Paul had in his mind. Timothy ought to feel that this power was on his side.

Ver. 9.—*Saved for hath saved*, A.V.; *a for an*, A.V.; *times eternal for the world began*, A.V. Who saved us, and called us. The saving was in the gift of his only begotten Son to be our Saviour; the calling is the work of the Holy Spirit drawing individual souls to Christ to be saved by him. (For the power of God displayed in man's salvation, comp. Eph. i. 19, 20.) With a holy calling (comp. Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 2). Not according to our works (see Titus iii. 5; Eph. ii. 4–10). His own purpose and grace. If our calling were of works, it would not be by grace (Rom. iv. 4, 5; xi. 6), but it is "according to the riches of his grace . . . according to his good pleasure which he purposed in himself" (Eph. i. 9, 11). Before times eternal (πρὸ χρόνων αἰώνων). The phrase seems to have the same general meaning as πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου, "before the foundation of the world" (Eph. i. 4), where the general context is the same. The phrase itself occurs in Rom. xvi. 25 (χρόνους αἰώνους) and Titus i. 2, in which last place time is indicated posterior to the creation of men. In 1 Cor. ii. 7 we have simply πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων, "before the worlds," where αἶων is equivalent to αἰώνιος χρόνος, and in Eph. iii. 11, πρὸθεν τῶν αἰώνων, "the eternal purpose." In Luke i. 70 the phrase, ἀπ' αἰῶνος, is rendered "since the world began," and εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας (Matt. vi. 13), "for ever." So frequently εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, "for ever" (Matt. xxi. 19; John vi. 51, etc.), and εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων (Gal. i. 5; Eph. iii. 21; 1 Tim. i. 17, etc.), "for ever and ever." The usage of the LXX. is very similar, where ἀπ' αἰῶνος, εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων, αἶων τῶν αἰώνων, etc., are frequent, as well as the adjective αἰώνιος. Putting all these passages together, and adverting to the classical meaning of αἶων, and its Latin

equivalent, ævum, a "lifetime," we seem to arrive at the primary meaning of αἶων as being a "generation," and then any long period of time analogous to a man's lifetime. Hence χρόνοι αἰώνιοι would be times made up of successive generations, and πρὸ χρόνων αἰώνων would mean at the very beginning of the times which consisted of human generations. Αἶων τῶν αἰώνων would be one great generation, consisting of all the successive generations of mankind. The whole duration of mankind in this present world would be in this sense one vast αἶων, to be followed by we know not what succeeding ones. Thus Eph. i. 21, ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ is contrasted with ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι, the idea being that the world has its lifetime analogous to the lifetime of a man. The same period may also be considered as made up of several shorter αἰῶνες, the prediluvial, the patriarchal, the Mosaic, the Christian, and such like (see note to 1 Tim. i. 17).

Ver. 10.—*Hath now been manifested for its now made manifest*, A.V.; *Christ Jesus for Jesus Christ*, A.V.; *abolished for hath abolished*, A.V.; *brought for hath brought*, A.V.; *incorruption for immortality*, A.V. Hath now been manifested (φανερωθεῖσαν); a word of very frequent use by St. Paul. The same contrast between the long time during which God's gracious purpose lay hidden, and the present time when it was brought to light by the gospel, which is contained in this passage, is forcibly dwelt upon in Eph. iii. 1–12. The appearing (τῆς ἐπιφάνειας), applied here, as in the name of the Festival of the Epiphany, to the first advent, but in ch. iv. 1 and Titus ii. 13 and elsewhere applied to the second advent, "the glorious appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus ii. 13). Abolished (καταργήσαντος); i.e. "destroyed," or "done away," or "made of none effect," as the word is variously rendered (1 Cor. xv. 26; 2 Cor. iii. 11; Gal. iii. 17; comp. Heb. ii. 14). Brought . . . to light (φωτίσαντος); as in 1 Cor. iv. 15. Elsewhere rather "to give light," or "to enlighten" (see Luke xi. 36; Heb. vi. 4; x. 32, etc.). For a full description of the abolition of death and the introduction of eternal life in its stead, through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, see Rom. v. and vi., and especially vi. 8–11. Through the gospel; because the gospel both declares the death and resurrection of Christ, and calls us to share in them. These mighty glories of the gospel were good reasons why Timothy should not be ashamed of the testimony of his Lord, nor shrink from the afflictions of the gospel. They were signal evidences of the power of God.

Ver. 11.—*Was for am*, A.V.; *teacher for teacher of the Gentiles*, A.V. and T.R. Was appointed (ἐρέθην); comp. 1 Tim. i. 12, &c.

μενος εἰς διακονίαν," "appointing me to the ministry;" and ii. 7. A preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher (so also 1 Tim. ii. 7). Teacher (διδάσκαλος) is one of the spiritual offices enumerated in 1 Cor. xii. 28 and Eph. iv. 11. It is surely remarkable that neither here nor elsewhere does St. Paul speak of any call to the priesthood in a sacerdotal sense (see Rom. i. 1, 5; xv. 16; 1 Cor. i. 1, etc.).

Ver. 12.—*Suffer also for also suffer, A.V.; yet for nevertheless, A.V.; him whom for whom, A.V.; guard for keep, A.V.* For the which cause (ver. 6, note) I suffer also. The apostle adds the weight of his own example to the preceding exhortation. What he was exhorting Timothy to do he was actually doing himself, without any wavering or hesitation or misgiving as to the result. I know him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him. The ground of the apostle's confidence, even in the hour of extreme peril, was his perfect trust in the faithfulness of God. This he expresses in a metaphor drawn from the common action of one person entrusting another with some precious deposit, to be kept for a time and restored whole and uninjured. All the words in the sentence are part of this metaphor. The verb *πεπιστευκα* must be taken in the sense of "entrusting" (*curas ac fidei alienius committo*), as Luke xvi. 11. So *πιστευθῆναι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον*, "to be entrusted with the gospel" (1 Thess. ii. 4); *οἰκονομίαν πεπιστεύμαι*, "I am entrusted with a dispensation" (1 Cor. ix. 17; see Wisd. xiv. 5, etc.). And so in classical Greek, *πιστεύειν τινί τι* means "to entrust something to another" to take care of for you. Here, then, St. Paul says (not as in the R.V., "I know him whom I have believed," which is quite inadmissible, but), "I know whom I have trusted [*i.e.* in whom I have placed confidence, and to whom I have committed the keeping of my deposit], and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have entrusted to him (*τὴν παραθήκην μου*) unto that day." The *παραθήκη* is the thing which Paul entrusted to his faithful guardian, one who he knew would never betray the trust, but would restore it to him safe and sound at the day of Christ. What the *παραθήκη* was may be difficult to express in any one word, but it comprised himself, his life, his whole treasure, his salvation, his joy, his eternal happiness—all for the sake of which he risked life and limb in this world, content to lose sight of them for a while, knowing that he should receive them all from the hands of God in the day of Christ. All thus hangs perfectly together. There can be no reasonable doubt that *παραθήκην μου* means "my deposit"—that

which I have deposited with him. Neither is there the slightest difficulty in the different applications of the same metaphor in ver. 14 and in 1 Tim. vi. 20. For it is as true that God entrusts to his faithful servants the deposit of the faith, to be kept by them with jealous fidelity, as it is that his servants entrust to him the keeping of their souls, as knowing him to be faithful.

Ver. 13.—*Hold for hold fast, A.V.; pattern for form, A.V.; from for of, A.V.* Hold (*ἔχε*). This use of *ἔχειν* in the pastoral Epistles is somewhat peculiar. In 1 Tim. i. 13, *ἔχω πίστιν*, "holding faith;" in iii. 6, *ἔχοντας τὰ μυστήρια*, "holding the mystery of the faith;" and here, "hold the pattern," etc. It seems to have a more active sense than merely "have," and yet not to have the very active sense of "hold fast." It may, however, well be doubted whether *ἔχε* here is used in even as strong a sense as in the other two passages, inasmuch as here it follows instead of preceding the substantive (see Alford, *in loc.*). The pattern (*ὑποτύπωση*); only here and 1 Tim. i. 16 (where see note), where it manifestly means a "pattern," not a "form." The word signifies a "sketch," or "outline." St. Paul's meaning, therefore, seems to be: "For your own guidance in teaching the flock committed to you, and for a pattern which you will try and always copy, have before you the pattern or outline of sound words which you have heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." Sound words (*ὁγιασμένων λόγων*); see 1 Tim. i. 10, note. In faith and love; either hold the pattern in faith and love, or which you have heard in faith and love.

Ver. 14.—*Guard for keep, A.V.; through for by, A.V.* That good thing (*τὴν καλὴν παραθήκην*, R.T., for *παρακαταθήκην*); see 1 Tim. vi. 20, and note. This naturally follows the preceding verse. Faithfulness in maintaining the faith was closely connected with the maintenance of sound words.

Ver. 15.—*That are for they which are, A.V.; turned for be turned, A.V.; Phygelus for Phygellus, A.V. and T.R.* Turned away from (*ἀπεστράφησαν με*). This verb is used, as here, governing an accusative of the person or thing turned away from, in Titus i. 14; Heb. xii. 25, as frequently in classical Greek. The use of the aorist here is important, as St. Paul does not mean to say that the Churches of Asia had all forsaken him, which was not true, and which it would be absurd to inform Timothy of if it were true, living as he was at Ephesus, the central city of Asia, but adverts to some occasion, probably connected with his trial before Nero, when they shrank from him in a cowardly way. *Πάντες οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ* means "the whole party in Asia" connected with the

particular transaction to which St. Paul is alluding, and which was known to Timothy though it is not known to us. Perhaps he had applied to certain Asiatics, whether Christians or Jews or Græco-Romans, for a testimony to his orderly conduct in Asia, and they had refused it; or they may have been at Rome at the time, and avoided St. Paul; and among them Phygelus and Hermogenes, whose conduct may have been particularly ungrateful and unexpected. Nothing is known of either of them.

Ver. 16.—*Grant for give, A.V. Grant mercy (δὲνέειν ἔλεος)*. This connection of the words is only found here. The house of Onesiphorus. It is inferred from this expression, coupled with that in ch. iv. 19, that Onesiphorus himself was no longer living; and hence ver. 18 (where see note) is thought by some to be an argument for prayers for the dead. The inference, further strengthened by the peculiar language of ver. 18, though not absolutely certain, is undoubtedly probable. The connection between this and the preceding verse is the contrast between the conduct of Phygelus and Hermogenes and that of Onesiphorus. They repudiated all acquaintance with the apostle in his day of trial; he, when he was in Rome, diligently sought him and with difficulty found him, and oft refreshed him with Christian sympathy and communion, acting with no less courage than love. He was no longer on earth to receive a prophet's reward (Matt. x. 41), but St. Paul prays that he may receive it in the day of Christ, and that meanwhile God may requite to his family the mercy he had showed to St. Paul. Refreshed me (*ἀνέψυξεν*); literally, *revived me*. Only here in the New Testament, but comp. Acts iii. 19. *Chain* (*ἔλυσιν*); in the singular, as Eph. vi. 20; Acts xxviii. 20 (where see note).

Ver. 17.—*Sought for sought out, A.V.; diligently for very diligently, A.V. and T.E.*

Ver. 18.—*To find for that he may find, A.V.; ministered for ministered unto me, A.V. (The Lord grant unto him)*. The parenthesis seems only to be required on the supposition that the words *δὲνέειν αὐτῷ ὁ Κύριος εὐρεῖν ἔλεος, κ.τ.λ.*, are a kind of play on the *εὐρεῖν* of the preceding verse. Otherwise it is better to take the words as a new sentence. The repetition of "the Lord" is remarkable, but nothing seems to hang upon it. The second *παρὰ Κυρίου* seems to suppose the Lord sitting on the judgment-throne. As regards the amount of encouragement given by this passage to prayers for the dead (supposing Onesiphorus to have been dead), the mere expression of a pious wish or hope that he may find mercy is a very slender foundation on which to build the superstructure of prayer and Masses for the deliverance of souls from purgatory. In how many things, etc. St. Paul does not say, as the A.V. makes him say, that Onesiphorus "ministered unto him" at Ephesus. It may have been so, but the words do not necessarily mean this. "What good service he did at Ephesus" would faithfully represent the Greek words; and this might describe great exertions made by Onesiphorus after his return from Rome to procure the apostle's acquittal and release by the intercession of the principal persons at Ephesus.¹ This would, of course, be known to Timothy. It may, however, describe the ministerial labours and services of Onesiphorus at Ephesus after his return from Rome, or it may refer to former ministrations when Paul and Timothy were at Ephesus together (see Introduction). There seem to be no materials for arriving at absolute certainty on the point.

¹ An almost identical explanation is suggested by Hofmann, as quoted by Huther in a note to this passage.

HOMILETICS.

Vers. 1—7.—*Reminiscences*. A ring once given to an old and loved friend, who in later life had been cut off from the former loving intercourse by the inevitable course of events, bore this touching inscription, "Cara memoria dei primieri anni" (dear memory of old times). The memories of a happy unclouded youth, of youthful friendships, of joyous days, of pursuits lit up by sanguine hopes and bright expectations, are indeed often among the most precious treasures of the heart. And in like manner the recollection of former triumphs of faith in days of dark doubt and difficulty, of temptations overcome, of victories gained, of grace received, of work done for God, of Christian intercourse with God's saints, and happy hours of prayer, and treading underfoot all the powers of darkness, are not only bright lights illuminating the past journey of life, but are often among our strongest incentives to perseverance, and our best encouragements to hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering. St. Paul, that great master in the knowledge of human nature, knew this well. And so with inimitable skill—a skill heightened and set off by the warm affections of a tender heart—he calls back

Timothy's recollections to the days of his early faith. That there had been anything like a falling away from the faith in Timothy, any real declension in his religious life, there is no reason to believe. But the quick eye of the apostle had detected some symptoms of weakness. The pulse of firm resolution, as dangers thickened around him, had not beaten so steadily as he would have wished. He did not see the symptoms of Christian courage rising with the rising flood of difficulty quite so marked as to set his mind at ease as to what might happen if, after his own death, which he felt was near, Timothy were left alone to confront the perils of a fierce persecution, or to guide the wavering purpose of timid and fainting disciples. And so he calls back his dearly beloved son in the faith to the old days of his first conversion. The lessons of faith and obedience learnt on his mother's knee in the dear home at Lystra, whose blessed fruit had attracted St. Paul's notice; the first appearance of the apostle in those regions in the noonday of his apostolic zeal; the bold front with which he had met the storm of affliction and persecution; Timothy's own warm surrender of himself to the companionship of the great teacher, and his exchange of a happy, peaceful home for the wandering life and incessant peril of an evangelist; then the solemn time of his ordination—the time when, with prayer and fasting, he had knelt to receive the laying on of hands, and had exulted in the new gift of God with which he might go forth fearlessly and lovingly, and in a strength not his own, to emulate his father in the faith in preaching the gospel of God's saving grace,—Oh, let Timothy cherish those dear memories of former times! And there were later memories still. Their last meeting, and their last adieu. They had parted, under what circumstances we do not know; St. Paul hastening on to his crown of martyrdom, Timothy remaining at his post of work and of danger. And Timothy had wept. Were they tears of bitterness, tears of compunction, tears of a heart broken and melting under a gentle loving reproof, or were they only tears of sorrow at parting? We cannot say for certain; but St. Paul remembered them, and he recalls them to Timothy's memory too. He adds the hope that, as they had sown in tears, they would reap in joy—the joy, perhaps, of a healed wound and renovated spiritual strength, or, at all events, the joy of meeting once more before the fall of the curtain of death to close the drama of Paul's eventful life. The lesson left for us by these heart-stirring words is the value of the memory of the past when brought to bear upon the work of the future. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits," is a sentiment which continually comes up in the varied experiences of the psalmist. He quickened hope in the land of banishment by remembering the days of happy worship in the house of God (Ps. xlii.); he added depth to his sorrow for sin by recalling the memory of that joy of salvation which he had forfeited by his fall (Ps. li.). And so we shall do well in times of weakness to remember our former strength; in days of darkness to call to mind the days of light that were of old; in days of slackness and indolence to call back the memory of the time when we were all on fire to do God's work; in days of depression to think of old mercies shown and old graces given to us of God; to quench the fear of defeat by the recollection of ancient victories; and, in a word, to make the past supply the present with incentives to an undying zeal, and a steadfast courage in facing all the afflictions of the gospel according to the unchanging power of God.

Vers. 8—18.—*Constancy in the hour of danger.* There are great differences of natural temperament in different men. There are those whose courage is naturally high. Their instinct is to brave danger, and to be confident of overcoming it. They do not know what nervousness, or sinking of heart, or the devices of timidity, mean. Others are of a wholly different temperament. The approach of danger unnerves them. Their instinct is to avoid, not to overcome, danger; to shrink from suffering, not to confront it. There are ever in the Church the bold and dauntless Gideons, and the wavering and timid Peters. But the grace of God is able to strengthen the weak hands and to confirm the feeble knees. He can say to them that are of fearful heart, "Be strong; fear not." He can give power to the faint, and increase strength to them that have no might. And there is perhaps no more edifying sight than that of the quiet unboasting courage of those whose natural timidity has been overcome by an overpowering sense of duty and of love to Christ, and who have learnt, in the exercises of prayer and meditation on the cross of Christ, to endure hardness without flinching, as

good soldiers of Jesus Christ. But to yield to fear, and, under its influence, to be ashamed to confess the Name of Jesus Christ, and to repudiate fellowship with those who are suffering for Christ's sake and the gospel's, lest we should fall into the same reproach with them, is sin, and sin most unworthy of those for whom Christ died, and who have been made partakers of so great salvation. No plea of natural timidity can excuse such unworthy conduct. It behoves, therefore, men of a timid and gentle spirit to fortify their faith by frequent contemplation of the cross of Christ, and habitually to take up that cross, and by it crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts. Let them think often of their holy calling, remember that they are the servants of him who "endured the cross, despising the shame," and look forward to the recompense of reward. Let them contrast the base, unmanly conduct of the men of Asia, who turned away from the noble Paul in his hour of danger, with the faithful, generous conduct of Onesiphorus, who sought him out in his prison and was not ashamed of his chain. And surely they will come to the conclusion that affliction with the people of God is better than immunity from suffering purchased by shame and sin.

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Vers. 1, 2.—*The apostle's address and greeting.* This Epistle, which has been well described as "the last will and testament" of the apostle, written as it was under the very shadow of death, opens with a touching evidence of personal interest in Timothy.

I. THE ORIGIN AND DESIGN OF THE APOSTLESHIP. "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God." 1. *He was an apostle.* (1) Not by the will of man, even of other apostles. (2) Nor by his own will; for he did not take this honour upon himself. (3) Nor was it owing to his personal merits; for he always speaks of it as "the grace of apostleship." (4) He was an apostle by the will of God, whose "chosen vessel" he was for this purpose. 2. *The design of his apostleship was "according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus."* Its design was to make known this promise. (1) It was life eternal; (2) promised in Christ Jesus, because (a) it was "promised before the world began" (Titus i. 2); (b) in Christ, who is the Prince of life, who procured it, who applies it by his Spirit.

II. THE PERSON ADDRESSED. "To Timothy, my beloved son." Not, as in the former Epistle, "my true son," but a son specially dear to him in view of the approaching severance of the earthly tie that bound them together.

III. THE GREETING. "Grace, mercy, and peace." (See homiletical hints on 1 Tim. i. 2).—T. C.

Vers. 3—5.—*Thankful declaration of love and remembrance of Timothy's faith.*

I. THE APOSTLE'S AFFECTIONATE INTEREST IN HIS YOUNG DISCIPLE. "I give thanks to God, whom I serve from my forefathers in a pure conscience, as unceasing is the remembrance I have of thee in my prayers night and day; greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy." 1. *The apostle begins all Epistles with the language of thanksgiving.* God is the Object of thanksgiving, both as God of nature and as God of grace, and there is no blessing we have received that ought not to be thankfully acknowledged. 2. *It is allowable for a good man to take pleasure in the thought of a consistently conscientious career.* His service of God was according to the principles and feelings he inherited from his ancestors "in a pure conscience" (Acts xxiii. 1; xxiv. 14). 3. *Ministers ought to be much engaged in prayer for one another so as to strengthen each other's hands.* 4. *The thought of approaching death makes us long to see the friends who have been most endeared to us in life.* (1) The apostle remembered Timothy's sorrow at their last parting. (2) Though he had commanded him before to stay at Ephesus, he now desired to see him, because he was alone in prison, with Luke as his only companion. (3) The sight of Timothy in Rome would fill him with joy beyond that imparted by all the other friends and companions of his apostolic life.

II. THE APOSTLE'S THANKSGIVING FOR TIMOTHY'S FAITH. "Being put in remembrance of the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that also in thee." 1. *The quality of this*

faith. "Unfeigned," Timothy was "an Israelite indeed," who believed with the heart unto righteousness, his faith working by love to God and man, and accompanied by good works. 2. *Its permanent character.* "It dwelt in him." Faith is an abiding grace; Christ, who is its Author, is also its Finisher; and salvation is inseparably connected with it. 3. *The subjects of this faith.* "First in thy grandmother Lois, and in thy mother Eunice." (1) Lois was his grandmother by the mother's side, for his father was a Greek; and Eunice, his mother, was probably converted at Lystra, at no great distance from Tarsus, the native city of the apostle (Acts xvi. 1; xiv. 6). (a) It is pleasant to see faith transmitted through three generations. It is sin, and not grace, that is easily transmitted by blood. But when we are "born, not of blood, but of God," we have reason to be thankful, like the apostle, for such a display of rich family mercy. (b) We see here the advantages of a pious education, for it was from the persons named we obtained in his youth that knowledge of the Scriptures which made him wise unto salvation (ch. iii. 15). (c) How often Christian mothers have given remarkable sons to the ministry of God's Church! (Augustine and Monica.) (2) Timothy was himself a subject of this faith. He did not break off the happy continuity of grace in his family, but worthily perpetuated the best type of ancestral piety.—T. C.

Ver. 6.—*The apostle's admonition to Timothy to stir up the gift of God within him.* It was because of his persuasion of Timothy's faith, and perhaps of the apprehension that the young disciple had been depressed by his own long imprisonment, that he addressed him in this manner.

I. THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS POSSESSED BY TIMOTHY. "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance to stir up the gift of God which is in thee by means of the laying on of my hands."

1. *He refers to the special gift received by Timothy with a view to his office as an evangelist.* It was not anything either natural or acquired, but something bestowed by the Spirit of God which would fit him for teaching and ruling the Church of God. 2. *It was conferred by the hands of the apostle along with the presbytery* (1 Tim. iv. 14).

II. THE NECESSITY OF STIRRING UP THIS SPIRITUAL GIFT. 1. *It is possible there may have been some slackness or decline of power on Timothy's part, arising from various causes of discouragement, to make this injunction necessary.* 2. *The gift was to be stirred up by reading, meditation, and prayer,* so that he might be enabled, with fresh zeal, to reform the abuses of the Church and endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus-Christ.—T. C.

Ver. 7.—*The Divine equipment for arduous service in the Church.* The apostle here adds a reason for the injunction just given.

I. NEGATIVELY. "For God did not give us the spirit of cowardice." 1. *This refers to the time of the ordination of Timothy and of the apostle.* Courage is an essential qualification for ministers of the gospel. 2. *Cowardice is unworthy of those who have received the gospel in trust.* The fear of man has a very wide dominion, but those who fear God ought to know no other fear. (1) This fear tends to unworthy compliances. (2) Trust in God is a preservation from fear (Ps. xxvii. 1). (3) Our Lord exhorts us strongly against such fear (John xiv. 27).

II. POSITIVELY. "But of power, and of love, and of self-control." 1. *The spirit of power,* as opposed to the weakness of cowardice; for the servants of Christ are fortified against persecutions and reproaches, are enabled to endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ, and to quit themselves like men. 2. *The spirit of love.* This will make them earnest in their care for souls, indefatigable in labours, fearless in the midst of trying exigencies, and self-sacrificing in love. 3. *The spirit of self-control.* This will enable the servant of Christ to keep his whole being in subjection to the Lord, apart from all the solicitations of the world, and to regulate life with a due regard to its duties, its labours, and its cares.—T. C.

Ver. 8.—*Warning to Timothy not to be ashamed of the gospel, nor to shrink from afflictions.* This exhortation is dependent upon the previous counsel.

I. THE MINISTER OF GOD MUST NOT BE ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL. "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, nor of me his prisoner." 1. *The testimony of the Lord is that borne concerning his doctrine, sufferings, and death; in a word, the*

gospel itself. 2. *No Christian can be ashamed of a gospel of such power, so true, so gracious, so useful.* 3. *No Christian can be ashamed of its confessors.* The apostle was a prisoner at Rome for its sake, not for crime of any sort. The gospel then laboured under an immense load of pagan prejudice, and Timothy needed to be reminded of his obligations to sympathize with its greatest expounder.

II. THE MINISTER OF GOD MUST SHARE IN THE AFFLICTIONS OF THE GOSPEL. "But be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God." 1. *Though it is a gospel of peace, it brings a sword wherever it goes,* and involves its preachers in tribulations arising out of the perverseness of men who thwart and despise it. 2. *We ought to suffer hardship for the gospel,* by the consideration that the God who has saved us with such a strong hand is able to succour us under all our afflictions. —T. C.

Vers. 9—11.—*The power of God in the salvation manifested by Jesus Christ to the world.* He now proceeds to expound in a glorious sentence the origin, conditions, manifestations of the salvation provided in the gospel.

I. THE MANNER IN WHICH THE POWER OF GOD HAS BEEN DISPLAYED TOWARD US. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." 1. *The power of God has been displayed toward us in salvation.* God is the Author of salvation in its most comprehensive sense, as including both its imputation and its application. The salvation may be said to precede the calling, as (1) it has its origin in the "purpose of God," (2) as Christ has procured it by his death. 2. *It has been displayed in our calling.* (1) The call is the act of the Father (Gal. i. 6). (2) It is a "holy calling," (a) as its Author is holy; (b) it is a call to holiness; (c) the called are enabled to live holy lives. 3. *The principle or condition of our salvation.* "Not according to our works." (1) *Negatively.* Works are not (a) the moving cause of it, which is the love and favour of God (John iii. 16); (b) nor are they the procuring cause, which is the obedience and death of Christ (Rom. iii. 21—26); (c) nor do they help in the application of salvation; for works done before our calling are not good, being without faith; and works done after it are the fruits of our calling, and therefore not the cause of it. (2) *Positively.* "But according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began." Salvation has thus a double aspect. (a) It is "according to the purpose of God." It is a gift from eternity; for it was "before the world began," and therefore it was not dependent upon man's works. (b) It is according to "his grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Though those to whom it was given were not in existence, they existed in Christ as the covenant Head and Representative of his people. They were chosen in him (Eph. i. 4).

II. THE MANIFESTATION OF THIS PURPOSE AND GRACE IN THE INCARNATION AND WORK OF CHRIST. "But manifested now by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ." 1. *The nature of this manifestation.* It included (1) the Incarnation; for the Son of God appeared in the fulness of time to make known the "mystery hid from ages," even himself—"the Hope of glory"—to both Jew and Gentile; (2) the work of Christ, in the obedience of his life and the suffering of his death—in a word, the whole work of redemption. 2. *The effects of this manifestation.* "Who abolished death, and brought to light life and incorruptibility by means of the gospel." (1) Its action upon death. It has abolished or made it of none effect. Death is regarded both in its physical and its ethical aspects. (a) In its physical aspects, Christ has (a) deprived it of its sting, and made it a blessing to believers (Heb. ii. 14; 1 Cor. xv. 55), and (b) secured its ultimate abolition (Rev. xxi. 4). (b) In its ethical aspects, as working through a law of sin and death, Christ has caused us "to pass from death unto life" in regeneration (1 John iii. 14), and secured us from "the second death" (Rev. ii. 11). (2) Its revelation of life and incorruptibility. (a) Life here is the true life, over which death has no power—the new and blessed life of the Spirit. This was, in a sense, known to the Old Testament saints; but Christ exhibited it, in its resurrection-aspect, after he rose from the dead. It was in virtue of his resurrection, indeed, that the saints of the old economy had life at all. But they did not see it as we see it. (b) Incorruptibility. Not in reference to the risen body, but to the life of the soul, in its imperishable qualities, in its perfect

exemption from death (1 Pet. i. 4; Rev. xxi. 4). (c) The means of this revelation is the gospel, which makes this life perfectly known to men, as to its nature, as to the way into it, as to the persons for whom it is prepared or designed.

III. THE CONNECTION OF THE APOSTLE WITH THIS REVELATION OF LIFE. "For which I was appointed a herald and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles." He rehearses his titles of dignity at the very time that he points to them as entailing suffering upon him.—T. C.

Ver. 12.—*The grounds of his joyful confidence under all his sufferings.* I. His APOSTLESHIP WAS THE CAUSE OF HIS SUFFERINGS. "For which cause I also am suffering these things"—imprisonment, solitude, the hatred of Jew and Gentile. He estranged the Jews by preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, and he offended the Gentiles by denouncing their idolatries and undermining their lucrative superstitions.

II. HE OWNS NO SHAME IN THE GOSPEL. It may be an offence to the Greek and a stumbling-block to the Jew; but he is not ashamed of it, because he is not ashamed: 1. *Of its Author.* 2. *Of its truths and ordinances.* 3. *Of his own faith in it.* 4. *Of his sufferings for it.*

III. THE REASON WHY HE IS NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL. "For I know whom I have trusted, and am persuaded that he is able to keep my deposit till that day." 1. *He knows his Redeemer through faith and love and experience.* It is "eternal life" to know him (John xvii. 3). It is not that he merely knows of him, but he *knows* him—what he is, what he can do, what he has promised to do—and therefore he can trust him. 2. *His trust is in a known Person.* (1) The apostle would have been very foolish to trust an unknown person. We distrust strangers. We will only entrust that which is dear to us—our children or our money—to those known to us. (2) There are foolish people who think it a wiser, as well as a more meritorious thing, to believe without knowledge; like the Spanish Jesuit who said, "I believe in this doctrine, not in spite of its impossibility, but because it is impossible." The apostle held a very different view. (3) There are some people of whom we may say that the more they are known the less are they trusted. A fuller experience discovers flaws in their character forbidding confidence. But our Saviour is One who is trusted the more he is known, in all the various circumstances of human life. 3. *The apostle has placed his soul, as a precious deposit, in the hands of Christ,* with the assurance of its perfect safety. "I am persuaded that he is able to keep my deposit till that day." Several circumstances enhance the significance of this act of the apostle. (1) The value of the deposit. What can be more precious than the soul? (Mark viii. 37). (2) The danger of its loss. The soul is a lost thing, and but for grace eternally so. (3) The sinner feels the deposit is not safe with himself. Man cannot, any more than man's brother, save his own soul. (4) Who will take charge of this deposit? Many shrink from responsibility in cases of a difficult and delicate nature. But Jesus Christ has undertaken for us; he will take us completely in charge; he will keep our deposit till the day of judgment. (5) Mark the limit of time as to the safety of the deposit—"till that day." No day short of that—not even the day of death; for the completed glory is reserved for the day of judgment. That will be the day for the bestowal of the crown of life. 4. *Mark the assurance of the apostle as to the safety of his deposit.* "I am persuaded that he is able to keep my deposit." This shows (1) that assurance is a possible attainment (1 John v. 18); (2) that it is a cheering and sustaining experience.—T. C.

Ver. 13.—*Importance of the form of sound words.* "Hold the pattern of sound words." I. THIS INJUNCTION IMPLIES THAT THE DOCTRINES OF THE GOSPEL HAD BEEN ALREADY MOULDED INTO A CERTAIN SHAPE OR SYSTEM WHICH WAS EASILY GRASPED BY THE POPULAR MIND. As necessity arose, there was a restatement, in a new form, of the faith once professed so as to neutralize false theories. Thus the Apostle John recast the doctrine of Christ's manifestation in the world in his Epistles. There are other examples of such restatement. As errorists often seduce by an adroit use of words, it becomes necessary to have "a pattern of sound words," not merely as a witness for the truth, but as a protest against error. Timothy was in this case to adhere to the form of what he had heard from the apostle, and received with such "faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."

II. THE USE OF SUCH A FORM. 1. *It was a centre of doctrinal unity to the Church.* 2. *It exhibited the truth in a consistent light to the world.* 3. *It afforded a rallying-point in the conflict with systems of error.* 4. *It tended to spiritual stability.*—T. C.

Ver. 14.—*The importance of preserving the precious deposit of doctrine.* I. THERE IS A SYSTEM OF TRUTH DEPOSITED IN THE HANDS OF THE CHURCH. "That good deposit keep through the Holy Ghost who dwelleth in us." 1. *The truth is not discovered by the Church, but deposited in its keeping.* This is the significance of the words of Jude, when he speaks of "the faith once delivered to the saints." That is (1) "the faith"—a system of gospel doctrines recognized by the Church at large; (2) "delivered," not discovered or elaborated out of the Christian consciousness; (3) "once" delivered, in reference to the point of time when the revelation was made by inspired men; (4) deposited in the hands of men—"to the saints"—as trustees, for its safe keeping. It is 'a good deposit;' good in its Author, its matter, its results, its end.

II. IT IS THE DUTY OF MINISTERS AND MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH TO KEEP THIS DEPOSIT. 1. *They ought to do it, because it is a commanded duty.* 2. *Because it is for the Church's edification, safety, and stability.* 3. *Because it is for the glory of God.* 4. *They cannot do it except in the power of "the Holy Ghost who dwelleth in us."* (1) Because he leads us into all truth; (2) because he by the truth builds up the Church as "a habitation of God;" (3) because he gives the insight and the courage by which believers are enabled to reject the adulterations and mixtures of false systems.—T. C.

Ver. 15.—*The Asiatic desertion of the apostle.* He reminds Timothy of a fact well known to him already, that he had suffered from a melancholy desertion of friends.

I. THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF HIS LOSS. "All who are in Asia turned away from me." 1. *As to its nature.* It was not a repudiation of Christianity. It was a desertion of the apostle himself, either through fear of persecution, or through a repudiation of his catholic ideas on behalf of the Gentiles. The Christian Jews seem everywhere to have forsaken him. In one of his prison-letters he can only name two or three Jews who were a comfort to him in the gospel (Col. iv. 11). 2. *As to its extent.* The Asiatic desertion may have probably taken place in Rome itself, probably at a time when his life, and that of all Christians, was threatened by Nero; probably at the time referred to in the end of this Epistle, when he could say, "No man stood by me; all men forsook me." Those who would identify themselves with the apostle of the Gentiles at such a time would probably be Gentiles rather than Jews. Thus the number of the deserters might not be great. If the desertion took place in Asia Minor, it would only suggest a widespread falling away from the aged prisoner at Rome, but not from the gospel. The apostle singles out two persons quite unknown to us—"Phygelus and Hermogenes"—as the ringleaders of this movement. The fact that so few names are mentioned tends to reduce the extent of the sad misfortune.

II. THE EFFECT OF THIS DESERTION. The apostle does not dwell upon it, but rather dismisses the deserters in a single sentence. Yet: 1. *It would be a severe trial to the faith of the aged apostle in his dying days.* The desertion of friends is always a sore trial, but when the friendship is cemented by religion, its intensity is peculiarly enhanced. 2. The apostle refers to it with the view of stimulating Timothy to still greater courage in the cause of the gospel.—T. C.

Vers. 16—18.—*The praiseworthy conduct of Onesiphorus.* In contrast with the Asiatic deserters, he dwells upon the kindly sympathy of one Asiatic Christian whom he had long known at Ephesus.

I. THE KINDNESS OF ONESIPHORUS. "He oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: but, when he was at Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me." 1. *The apostle, as well as Timothy, had had an earlier experience of this good man,* who was probably an Ephesian merchant, who went from time to time to Rome to do business, for he says, "In how many things he ministered at Ephesus, thou knowest very well." 2. *He did not probably come to Rome from Ephesus for the special purpose of visiting the apostle,* but, having found himself there, he made it his business to visit the apostle. (1) He took pains to find out the apostle. "He sought me out very diligently." Why was it so difficult to discover the prison in which the apostle was

confined? There were many prisons in Rome, and he may have been transferred from prison to prison. But where were the Roman Christians who met the apostle on his first visit to the city, that they could not inform Onesiphorus of the place of the imprisonment? Had they too turned away from him? Or had Nero struck an unworthy terror into their hearts? Onesiphorus persevered, however, in his search, and found him in his prison. (2) He "oft refreshed the apostle, and was not ashamed of his chain." This implies (a) that he visited him more than once; (b) that the imprisonment, though severe, did not quite debar all access to the outside world; (c) that the Christians at Rome were impliedly ashamed of the apostles' chain, else such prominence would not have been given to the kindness and courage of this noble Ephesian saint.

II. THE RETURN WHICH THE APOSTLE MAKES FOR THE KINDNESS OF ONESIPHORUS. "The Lord give mercy to the house of Onesiphorus . . . the Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day." He cannot make any other return for kindness than a fervent prayer for Onesiphorus and for his family. 1. *The prayer suggests that though the apostle is shut up from the world, the way to heaven is still open.* He cannot pay his visitor the compliment of seeing him to the door, but he can remember him at a throne of grace. 2. *He remembers the household of this good man.* What blessings descend upon householders who are blessed with such a head! The apostle prays for "mercy" on this happy household. Every blessing is included in the term. 3. *The prayer for Onesiphorus himself is likewise a prayer for mercy.* Some have inferred that he was now dead, and that we have here an example of prayer for a dead man. The supposition is entirely gratuitous. Onesiphorus may have been absent from Ephesus, as he necessarily was on his visit to the apostle. Besides, his visit to the apostle must have occurred only a very short time previously, for it is admitted on all hands that the apostle's last imprisonment was very brief, and it is rather improbable that Onesiphorus should have died immediately after his visit to Rome, or that the apostle should have heard of it. Onesiphorus would have the blessing promised by our Lord in the memorable saying, "I was in prison, and ye visited me."—T. C.

Ver. 1.—*"The promise of life."* It was an age of death when St. Paul wrote this Epistle. Beneath all the gaieties of Roman civilization there was decay of morals, and corruption of the inner life. Suicide, as we have seen, was common in Rome, and men, tired of themselves, and disbelieving alike in present or in future joy, put an end to their earthly existence. St. Paul was now enduring his second imprisonment at Rome. In the year A.D. 63 the great conflagration, for which that master of crime, Nero, was responsible, took place, burning half the city. He falsely charged his own crime on the Christians, some of whom were covered with the skins of beasts and thrown to the dogs; some were covered with inflammable materials, and burnt as human torches, which illuminated the gardens; while the bestial Nero drove abroad in his chariot, and indulged his base delight in the carnival of fire and blood. St. Paul, knowing his own end to be near at hand, in a city where his second imprisonment had become much more severe than the first one had been, had now no opportunity of preaching, as he did under the milder treatment he was subjected to before, and gives this second charge to Timothy, whom he exhorts to be courageous and earnest in the defence and proclamation of a faith which the imprisoned apostle could proclaim no more.

I. THE PROMISE OF LIFE IS SPOKEN OF AS THE REVELATION OF CHRIST. It is in Christ Jesus. That is to say, we as believers have in vital union with him, the pledge and promise of immortality. No power of earth or hell could touch that life. St. Paul feared not those who could kill the body, and after that had no more that they could do. He knew that the life within no sword or flame could slay, and he rejoices in the triumph of faith in Christ.

II. THE PROMISE OF LIFE IS SPOKEN OF AS A DEVELOPING POWER. It was a promise, an earnest, of the inheritance. He was yet to have life more abundantly. He looked forward to a time when his environment would be heavenly in its atmosphere, and ever without the blight of sin or the blastings of temptation, he should enjoy the fruition of life at God's right hand for evermore.—W. M. S.

Ver. 3.—*"The inner self."* "With pure conscience." There is no music in the world comparable to this. It is "the voice of melody," and it enabled Paul and Silas to sing

in prison. The conscience, "that sole monarchy in man," was supreme in his nature under the Lordship of Christ.

I. IT WAS A CLEANSSED CONSCIENCE, AND SO PURE. St. Paul is never weary of preaching the great doctrine of the atonement—that we are redeemed and renewed through the precious blood of Christ; and he rejoices to know that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, *cleanseth* from all sin.

II. IT WAS AN OBEYED CONSCIENCE, AND SO PURE. We have to consider that the conscience may speak truly and authoritatively, and be enlightened by the truth, and yet we may not obey the truth; for duty may be recognized as duty, and yet not discharged as such. Conscience may not be pure as regards the question of accountability.

III. IT WAS FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT, AND SO PURE. "The Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us" is an expression of St. Paul's; and only so far as we have the "indwelling of the Spirit" in thought, imagination, conscience, and desire, can we said to be pure within.—W. M. S.

Ver. 5.—*A holy ancestry.* "Thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice." We were constituted to be influenced through the family relationship, and it is sad indeed when the young break away from a religious ancestry, and forsake their fathers' God.

I. HERE IS ALREADY AN HISTORIC PEDIGREE OF CHRISTIAN PEOPLE. The gospel had been long enough in the world to have a history in families. We find *three generations* here. The grandmother Lois, the mother Eunice, and "thee also."

II. HERE IS THE TRUE SPIRIT OF THE GOSPEL MANIFESTED. Unfeigned faith, or undissembled faith. No mere creed. No mere appearance of piety. In that age men of education despised the pagan faiths which they yet professed to believe. They kept up their actual adherence to heathen worship because of custom or family tradition, or because they believed religion in some sort to be the protective police of society, without which there would be revolution. This unfeigned faith was the faith of conviction—the faith that so believed in the risen Christ that it could endure persecution and suffer loss, and live or die for the sake of Christ, with the sure *hope of eternal life*.—W. M. S.

Ver. 6.—*Quickening the memory.* "I put thee in remembrance." Timothy was not to create a gospel, but to *preach* one. The facts and doctrines were matters of revelation, and Timothy had the humbler task of expanding and applying them. All through his gospel was to be that of the faith once delivered to the saints.

I. REMEMBRANCE IS NEEDED. Why? Memory is liable to slumber and to sleep. Do we mourn over this fact, and ask why this precious faculty was not stronger? Consider! Could you live in peace or joy at all, if all your sorrows and bereavements kept their clear details before your mind? No; their harrowing spectacles would deaden all the springs of life, and crush the heart. If those past griefs preserved their fullness life would be unendurable. There is a beautiful side, therefore, even to forgetfulness. Memory may slumber, but it does not die. It may be awakened and quickened for high and noble ends. Thus all Christians need to be "put in remembrance," that they may hold fast the Word of life.

II. REMEMBRANCE IS COMPREHENSIVE. There are many springs to be touched. We become proud, and need to remember, as the Hebrews did, that we "were slaves." We become self-dependent, and need to be reminded that "without Christ we can do nothing." We become so interested in life that we try to make "home" here, and forget that we are pilgrims and strangers. We become negligent, and forget that responsibility is great and time is short.—W. M. S.

Ver. 6.—*Stirring the fire.* "Stir up the gift that is in thee." Literally, "stir up (*ἀνακαμψαίνε*) the fire!" There may be fuel—even of God's Word—but all fires *die out* unless from time to time they are stirred up.

I. THE FIRE WAS THERE. His heart's altar fire had been lighted. It had descended as a Divine flame from on high. But in the best of men there is danger of absence of watchfulness, for, like the light on the Jewish altar, the fire is not to die out night nor day.

II. THERE WERE MANY ENEMIES WHO WOULD QUENCH THE FIRE. The Judaizing teachers would have put out the true gospel light, by turning the gospel into a merely refined Judaism. The world would quench it, as it did the faith of Demas. And there is in us all the danger of spiritual slumber, which leaves the fire to die out by indolence and sloth. Therefore by meditation, by prayer, and by earnest endeavour, by admiration and emulation of heroic lives, we must "*stir up* the fire" that is in us.—W. M. S.

Vers. 1—14.—*Address and salutation.* "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, according to the promise of the life which is in Christ Jesus, to Timothy, my beloved child: Grace, mercy, peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord." The language is similar to what is found in other of Paul's Epistles. The peculiarity is that his apostleship is here associated with *the promise* of the gospel, which like a rainbow spans our sky in this dark world. It is the promise by pre-eminence; for its object is *life*, which is a name for all that can be needed here, or manifested under better conditions. It is a promise which has actually secured sure footing in *Christ Jesus*, being the realization of the sure mercies of David. But, in order that this promise may become the means of life to men, it must be proclaimed; and this points to the employment of an instrumentality by God. It was according to the promise in this view that Paul was employed as an apostle. It is further to be observed that his *true child* in the First Epistle is here his *beloved child*. If the one points to the possession of his spirit, the other points to the love that is properly founded on it. *Good past to be followed by a good future.*

I. THANKSGIVING. 1. *Personal association in giving thanks.* "I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers in a pure conscience." He implies that Judaism was the forerunner of Christianity, and lays claim to the possession of a godly ancestry. The pure conscience (notwithstanding Acts xxiii. 1) is not to be absolutely applied to his whole life. He did turn aside from the godly direction in an unenlightened and culpable resistance to Christianity as seeming to threaten the existence of his inherited and beloved Judaism. But in the Christian position which he had so long maintained, as he had been indebted to godly forefathers, so he had preserved the godly continuity in his family. It is in view of what he has to say about Timothy that he makes this pleasing and interesting reference to his forefathers. 2. *Feelings toward Timothy in giving thanks for him.* "How unceasing is my remembrance of thee in my supplications, night and day longing to see thee, remembering thy tears, that I may be filled with joy." Always in the underground of the apostle's consciousness, the thought of his beloved Timothy came up uninterruptedly at his times of devotion. Every night and morning he felt the spell—so tender was this strong man's heart—of the tears shed by Timothy at their parting; and the desire rose within him that he might be filled with the joy of another meeting. 3. *Matter for thanksgiving in Timothy's faith which was hereditary.* "Having been reminded of the unfeigned faith that is in thee; which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and, I am persuaded, in thee also." Something had come to the apostle's knowledge which reminded him of the reality of Timothy's faith. It was not feigned faith, that fails under trial. The apostle thinks of it as a kind of *heirloom* in the family. He could go back himself to two ancestresses of his in whom it dwelt. There was first Lois, his grandmother, who, we can believe, besides being godly according to the Jewish type, was before her end a Christian believer. She had to do with her daughter Eunice becoming a Christian believer. We are told of Eunice, in Acts xvi. 1, that she was a Jewess who believed, while her husband was a Gentile. She in turn had to do with her son becoming a Christian believer. The apostle had all the greater confidence in the reality, and also vitality, of Timothy's faith that (apart from Jewish influences of a godly nature) he was a Christian believer of the third generation. We have the promise that God will keep covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a *thousand* generations. God's intention is that godly and Christian influence should be transmitted. He made one generation to follow another, proceeded on a principle of succession and not of contemporaneousness, that he might thereby have a *godly seed* (Mal. ii. 15). The best established Christians are among those who are of a godly stock. Therefore let the godly upbringing of the young be attended to. At the same time, let those

who have had the advantage of a godly upbringing see that they are not left behind by those who have been reclaimed from ungodly society.

II. EXHORTATION. 1. *Timothy is to stir up his gift.* "For the which cause I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee through the laying on of my hands." Paul is an adept at exhortation. Timothy, from the memory of Lois and Eunice, must catch fire. Nay, he had a personal association with Timothy, in having laid hands on him at his ordination. On that ground he can call upon him to stir up the gift then received, viz. the ministerial gift. Let him be true to his duties as a minister of Christ. 2. *Confirmatory reason pointing to special exhortation.* "For God gave us not a spirit of fearfulness; but of power and love and discipline." Let him stir himself up against cowardice to which, as persecuted, he was exposed, and by this consideration that the imparted spirit in its amplitude excludes cowardice. It is a spirit of *power*. God has no jealousy of us; he wishes to be served with our strength and not with our weakness. It is a spirit of *love*; warmth of feeling, and not coldness, God would put into our service. It is a spirit of *discipline*. So far as this is to be distinguished from the other two words, it points to the guidance of reason. God wishes to be served, not with our ignorance, but with our well-disciplined thoughts. With more *power in our wills*, with more *glow in our affections*, with more *reason in our thoughts*, we shall not cower before opposition. 3. *Timothy is called upon to be specially on his guard against false shame.* "Be not ashamed therefore of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but suffer hardship with the gospel." "Shame attends fear; when fear is conquered false shame takes flight" (Bengel). He had no reason for being ashamed on account of his association with the Lord to whom he testified. Neither had he reason for being ashamed on account of his association with Paul, who was not the Lord's servant, but, more honourably (Gal. vi. 17), the Lord's prisoner, i.e. by the will of Christ, more than by the will of Caesar—a prisoner, the disposal of him extending to the time, and all the circumstances, of his imprisonment. *To suffer hardship with the gospel* involves an unusual collocation of person and thing. It is usual to interpret the hardship as being suffered *with Paul* for the gospel. But as the thought requires the fixing of the attention, not on the second, but on both of the preceding clauses, it is better to leave indefinite with whom he is associated in suffering hardship. 4. *Reason against false shame in the power of God.* "According to the power of God." The idea is that we should be free from shame in suffering for the gospel, according to the power on which we have to rely. (1) *It is a saving power.* "Who saved us, and called us with a holy calling." Power has already been displayed toward us in *salvation*, which we can think of as completed outside of us. It has also been operative within us, in our being called. When our unwillingness to accept of salvation was broken down, then we were called of God. It was with a holy calling that we were called, and it belongs to it as holy that we should be above shame in connection with Christ's cause. The power that has already been displayed toward us is all in the direction of our being saved from this shame. (2) *It is a free power.* "Not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before times eternal." It is a power that is not determined in its exercise by our works or deservings. It was according to his own purpose, i.e. not from outward occasion, but arising in the depths of his own being. It was according to a purpose of grace, i.e. in which sinners, or the undeserving, were contemplated as in need. It was according to a purpose of grace in Christ Jesus, i.e. in which there was a looking to human merit only as in Christ. It was according to a purpose of grace before times eternal, i.e. long before man could have to do with it. Being a power so entirely pending on God, we can have confidence that it will go out, in the freest, most gracious manner, toward us. (3) *It is a glorious power.* "But hath now been manifested by the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought light and incorruption to light through the gospel." Hidden in God in eternity, it was for a time partially manifested. The time of its full manifestation corresponded with the appearing of Christ, which was also the *medium* of the manifestation. This is the only place in the New Testament in which the appearing is to be identified with the Incarnation, or the whole of Christ's appearance in flesh. That appearing was as one of the weak things of the world. Especially did Christ seem to be the very impersonation of weakness when he was on the cross. And yet this was the grandest

display of power, confounding the mighty; for it is here said that by this appearing he abolished death. He appeared in flesh, and endured death in all its *reality*, and, by doing so, he has made it no longer a reality to his people. He has made it of none effect. He has made it so that it cannot tyrannize over them. And, though they have to endure death, it is not as a token of God's displeasure, but as his wise and good arrangement, and introduction into a state from which death is for ever excluded. The positive side of the benefit derived from the appearing is presented under a slightly different aspect. It is regarded as presented in the gospel. And as death is a dark power, so the gospel is a light-giving power. What it has brought to light is of the utmost consequence. It is life, and life with the superlative quality of imperishableness. Under heathenism men had no right conception of life. Even with all the help that philosophy could give them, the meaning of life was dark to them. The gospel has shown it to consist in the favour of God, and the quickening of all our faculties under the breath of his Spirit. But specially are we to think of life in its imperishableness. We know that, to the heathen generally, the future was an absolute blank. A few of them had glimmerings, not of a resurrection, but of the survival of the thinking part, with some reward for the good. The gospel has brought immortality into the full clear light. It has given us the certainty of our existence after death. It, moreover, holds out before us the prospect of a life that is to be spent, without intermission or end, in the sunshine of God's love, with ever increased quickening of all our powers—a life in which there will be a reunion of soul and body, of which already we have the earnest in the resurrection of Christ. It is our great privilege that we live under this light of the gospel. It is the imperishableness of the life of God that is here begun that has power to nerve the soul, even to martyrdom. 5. *Reason against false shame in the example of the apostle.* (1) *Suffering connected with his office.* "Whereunto I was appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher. For the which cause I suffer also these things." As in 1 Tim. ii. 8, he takes a threefold designation of office. As preacher or herald, it was his duty to cry aloud. As apostle, he was specially invested with authority. As teacher, he had to go among the Gentiles. It was a glad message in relation to which he exercised his office, and it should have brought him many a welcome. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!" But it brought him many a rebuff, and much outward disgrace; for at this time he was suffering his second imprisonment in Rome, and was nearing his martyrdom. (2) *Triumph over shame.* "Yet I am not ashamed." The apostle does not exhort Timothy without setting him an example. It was no small matter to him to be counted by men only worthy of imprisonment, and, very soon, of death. But he was so much impressed with the supreme importance of the gospel, that he heeded not the shame. (3) *His personal assurance.* *Its strength.* "For I know him whom I have believed." As he is here speaking of his being a prisoner, we naturally take the reference to be to him whose prisoner in the eighth verse he declared himself to be, viz. the Lord. He had lived a life of faith on Christ; and he could speak confidently, from his own experience of him. Not *I think I know him*, but, as one would speak of a friend whom he has long and intimately lived with, *I know him*. Without experience we cannot have the assurance that excludes doubt. Only when we have tried Christ, and found him sufficient for us in all positions of life, can we rise above the language of hesitation. *Its well-supported nature.* "And I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day." What is guarded is literally *my deposit*, and, as in the thirteenth verse "deposit" is something committed to Timothy, so some would think here of something committed to Paul, viz. his stewardship. But, as the guardian is also naturally the holder, we naturally think of something committed by Paul to Christ; and what was that but his interest, his stake in the future world, dependent on his faithfulness in this? How did Paul know that it would not turn out a blank, or be much diminished by future failure? The explanation was that he had put it into Christ's hands, and he trusted in him being able to guard it for him against that day, viz. the day of judgment, when it would become irreversibly, gloriously his, being as it were handed back to him by Christ. One who has this well-grounded assurance can meet death even triumphantly. 6. *Timothy is further called upon to attend specially to his orthodoxy.* (1) *The pattern.* "Hold the pattern of sound words which thou hast heard from me, in faith and love

which is in Christ Jesus." There is a form of sound words, *i.e.* there is a correct expression of truth which is to be coveted, because on this depends the healthfulness of the life. To this form Paul had shaped his preaching. He had not indulged in logomachies, or private speculations, or adaptations to other systems, but he had kept himself, as a well-disciplined thinker, to a plain, rational, forcible statement, and urging of what he believed to be necessary for the salvation of souls. Timothy was familiar with his truthful and healthful style; let it be the pattern to which he disciplined his thoughts and his preaching. He could only hold the pattern in the Christian element of faith and love. (2) *The good deposit.* "That good thing which was committed unto thee guard through the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us." This is the same thing under a different aspect, *viz. the talent of the catholic faith*, which a preacher has to guard. It is good, has vast blessings connected with it; therefore it is not to be neglected, it is to be kept from all mischances. The preacher must pray, think, use the help of the rule of faith, practise himself. But all his keeping, to be of any avail, must be allowing the Holy Ghost to keep, who is not far to seek, but is an Indweller in our souls. "So he giveth his beloved sleep," delivers him from the consuming restlessness which would haunt him, if the keeping simply depended on himself.—R. F.

Vers. 15—18.—*Contrasts.* I. PHYGELUS AND HERMOGENES. "This thou knowest, that all that are in Asia turned away from me; of whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes." The defection here referred to was from Paul and his interests. It extended to all that were in Asia, *i.e.* all Asiatics who at one time had been attached to the apostle, and whose attachment was put to the test when in Rome during his imprisonment. It was to have been expected of them that they would have found their way to his dungeon; but, as if they had put it to themselves whether they would go or not, they chose the latter alternative. They turned away from him. They probably found some excuse in the pressure of business; but in the real character of their action it was turning their back on the imprisoned apostle. In this not very numerous class Phygelus and Hermogenes are singled out for notice, probably because they had showed the greatest unbrotherliness. We know nothing more of them than is mentioned here. It has been their destiny to be handed down to posterity as men who acted an unworthy part toward a noble man in his extremity. They did not know that such an evil immortality was to attach to their action; but their action was on that account only the more free. Let all our actions be upright and generous; for we do not know by which of them we shall be known among men. This defection is referred to Timothy as being within his knowledge; for by their example he was to be deterred from cowardice, and his bravery was to be all the greater that these men were cowards.

II. ONESIPHORUS. There is a distinction observed between the house of Onesiphorus and Onesiphorus himself. With regard to the house of Onesiphorus they are objects of *present* interest. Blessings are invoked upon them in the sixteenth verse, to the manifest exclusion of Onesiphorus himself. At the close of the Epistle the same thing is observable: "Salute the house of Onesiphorus." With regard to Onesiphorus himself, nothing is said about his present: the past tense is used of him, and a wish is expressed about his future. It may, therefore, be regarded as certain that Onesiphorus was dead. 1. *Interest in departed friends shown in kindness to beloved ones left behind.* "The Lord grant mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus." There are around us the three circles of lovers, friends, acquaintances (Ps. lxxxviii. 18). Our love to the innermost circle is to be most intense, which it can be without interfering with our love to the second circle of friends. The proper cultivation of our affections in our homes will the better qualify us for loving our friends. There is an absence of reserve, and openness to influence, in friendship, which makes it, when properly based, a great blessing. There are duties which we owe to our friends when they are with us, and our duties do not end with their death. Onesiphorus had been the friend of Paul, and, now that he is gone, the large-hearted apostle, in writing to Timothy from his dungeon, breathes a prayer on behalf of the house of Onesiphorus. The Lord, *i.e.* Jesus Christ, the great Overseer of the Churches, and Appointer for the several households of which the Churches are composed, grant them mercy. They were objects of sympathy, in being deprived

II. TIMOTHY.

of their earthly head on whom it devolved to provide for them, to assist and counsel especially the beginners in life. The Lord mercifully make up for them what they had lost. Would this prayer return from heaven unanswered? Would not this kindly remembrance of them, read in their desolate home, bring good cheer to their hearts, and be an influence for good in all their future life? Would it not also be the means of raising up friends for them? 2. *Interest in the living founded on the past kindness of the dead.* "For he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; but, when he was in Rome, he sought me diligently, and found me." This was after his first answer, apparently during his second imprisonment, when awaiting his second answer. Paul leaned very much on human sympathy. On one occasion he said, "The Lord that comforteth them that are cast down, comforted me by the coming of Titus." So the Lord refreshed him by those visits of Onesiphorus. This friend was true to his name; he was a real *help-bringer*—bringer of comfort and strength to the great warrior whose battles were nearly over. He was a helper in presence of difficulties. He was not ashamed of his chain, *i.e.* braved all the dangers connected with his being regarded as the prisoner's friend. There was difficulty of access to him, such as there had not been during the first imprisonment, when he had his own hired house, and received all that came to him; but Onesiphorus sought him all the more diligently that he knew of his unbefriended condition, and overcame all official hindrances. In the strange working of providence, Onesiphorus came to his end before Paul, but his good deeds lived after him, and caused him to be remembered by Paul, and in that form which, had he been conscious of what was taking place on earth, would have been most pleasing to Onesiphorus. And this was not to be wondered at. Onesiphorus loved his home circle—this is an element in the case; but it did not absorb all his attention. He had a place in his heart for friends, and was ready to render them services. And this was acting more truly for the interests of his loved ones than if he had selfishly confined his attention to them. For when he was gone—taken away at a time when he was greatly needed by his children—there were those who were their well-wishers for the father's sake. There was the missionary, by whom there had been so much benefit, invoking his blessing on them. The psalmist says, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." And this can be explained without bringing in a special miracle. Indeed, the psalmist so explains it in the following verse: "He is ever *merciful, and lendeth*; and his seed is blessed." That is to say, by his good deeds when he is alive, he raises up friends for his children when he is dead. 3. *Interest in departed friends shown in pious wishes with respect to their future.* "The Lord grant unto him to find mercy of the Lord in that day." The following is to be noted as the teaching of Luther: "We have no command from God to pray for the dead, and therefore no one can sin who does not pray for them. For in what God has neither commanded nor forbidden, no man can sin. Yet because God has not granted us to know the state of the soul, and we must be uncertain about it, thou dost not sin that thou prayest for the dead, but in such wise that thou leave it in doubt and say thus, 'If this soul be in that state that thou mayest yet help it, I pray thee to be gracious unto it.' Therefore if thou hast prayed once or thrice, thou shouldest believe that thou art heard, and pray no more, lest thou tempt God." Beyond that Paul does not go. He follows Onesiphorus into the next world, and, when he thinks of him coming to the settling for what his earthly life had been, he devoutly breathes the wish that he may be mercifully dealt with. Such an expression of feeling is not to be forbidden us as we think of departed friends going forward to judgment; it is to be found in inscriptions in the catacombs. But it has no connection with a belief in purgatory, and is very different from the formal inculcation of prayers for the dead. 4. *Reference to Timothy as to services rendered by Onesiphorus at Ephesus.* "And in how many things he ministered at Ephesus, thou knowest very well." This was additional to services rendered by Onesiphorus to the apostle at Rome. He had not mentioned it before, because it had been within the sphere of Timothy's own observation. But he brings it in now, as what was fitted to support the charge of constancy he is laying on Timothy.—R. F.

EXPOSITION.

CHAPTER II.

Ver. 1.—*Child for son, A.V.; strengthened for strong, A.V. Be strengthened (ἐνδυναμοῦ); more exactly (as Huther), become strong, or, which is the same thing, strengthen thyself; implying, perhaps, though gently expressed, some previous weakness, as in Heb. xi. 34, "From weakness were made strong;" where the image seems to be that of recovery from sickness. In Eph. vi. 10, however (ἐνδυναμοῦσθε ἐν κυρίῳ), there is no evidence of preceding weakness, but only a call to use the strength they had; and it may be so here too. The strength, Timothy is reminded, by which he was to fight the good fight, was not his own, but that which would come to him from the grace and love of Jesus Christ (comp. 1 Cor. xv. 10; Phil. iv. 13).*

Ver. 2.—*Which for that, A.V.; from for of, A.V. The things which thou hast heard, etc. Here we have distinctly enunciated the succession of apostolical doctrine through apostolical men. We have also set before us the partnership of the presbyterate, and, in a secondary degree, of the whole Church, with the apostles and bishops their successors, in preserving pure and unadulterated the faith once delivered to the saints. There can be little doubt that St. Paul is here alluding to Timothy's ordination, as in 1 Tim. iv. 14; vi. 12; ch. i. 6, 7, 13, 14. Timothy had then heard from the apostle's lips a certain "form of sound words"—something in the nature of a creed, some summary of gospel truth, which was the deposit placed in his charge; and in committing it to him, he and the presbyters present had laid their hands on him, and the whole Church had assented, and confirmed the same. "Thus through many witnesses," whose presence and assent, like that of witnesses to the execution of a deed of transfer of land (Gen. xxiii. 10, 16, 18), was necessary to make the transaction valid and complete, had Timothy received his commission to preach the Word of God; and what he had received he was to hand on in like manner to faithful men, who should be able to teach the same to others also. Commit (παράδου); identifying the doctrine committed to be handed on with the deposit (παράθεκη) of 1 Tim. vi. 20 and ch. i. 14. It is important to note here both the concurrence of the presbyters and the assent of the Church. The Church has ever been averse to private ordinations, and has ever associated the people as consentient parties in ordination (Thirty-first Canon; Preface to "Form and Manner of Making of Deacons," and rubric at close—"in the face of the Church;")*

"Form and Manner of Ordering of Priests"—"Good people," etc.).

Ver. 3.—*Suffer hardship with me for thou therefore endure hardness, A.V. and T.R.; Christ Jesus for Jesus Christ, A.V. and T.R. Suffer hardship with me (συνκακοπάθησον), which is the reading "supported by the weightiest authorities" (Huther), as in ch. i. 8. The simple form κακοπάθησον, which is the reading of the T.R., occurs also in ver. 9 of this chapter, in ch. iv. 5, and in Jas. v. 13, and κακοπάθεια in Jas. v. 10. Both these simple forms are classical. But the context favours the compound form, and is supported by ch. i. 8, 12. (For the sentiment, see the "Ministration of Public Baptism"—"We receive this child," etc.)*

Ver. 4.—*Soldier on service for man that warreth, A.V.; in for with, A.V.; enrolled him as for hath chosen him to be, A.V. Soldier on service (στρατεύμενος); as 1 Cor. ix. 7 (see, too, 1 Tim. i. 18). In Luke iii. 14 στρατεύμενοι is rendered simply "soldiers," with margin, "Greek, soldiers on service." There is no difference in meaning between the "man that warreth" in the A.V., and the "soldier on service" of the R.V. Affairs (πραγματείας); only here in the New Testament, but common in the LXX. and in classical Greek, where it means, as here, "business," "affairs," "occupation," "trade," and the like, with the accessory idea of its being an "absorbing, engrossing pursuit." Enrolled him, etc. (στατολογήσαντι); only here in the New Testament, not found in the LXX., but common in classical Greek for "to levy an army," "to enlist soldiers." The great lesson here taught is that the warfare of the Christian soldier requires the same concentration of purpose as that of the earthly warrior, if he would win the victory.*

Ver. 5.—*Also a man for a man also, A.V.; contend in the games for strive for masteries, A.V.; he is not for yet is he not, A.V.; have contended for strive, A.V. Contend in the games (ἀγῶν); only here in the New Testament, and not found in the LXX., but common in classical Greek. It means "to contend for ἔθλον" the prize, to be an "athlete." This is also the meaning of the A.V. "strive for masteries." "To strive," means properly to contend with an antagonist, and "mastery" is an old English word for "superiority," "victory," or the like. Dryden has "mastership" in the same sense—*

"When noble youths for mastership should strive,
To quit, to run, and steeds and chariots drive."

(Ovid., 'Met.' bk. i.)

Lawfully (*voulweis*, as 1 Tim. i. 8); according to the laws and usages of the games. So Timothy must conform to the laws of the Christian warfare, and not shrink from afflictions, if he would gain the great Christian prize.

Ver. 6.—*The first to partake for first partaker*, A.V. That labourereth (*τὸν κοπιῶντα*). Let not Timothy think to shirk labour and yet enjoy its fruits. (For *κοιδῶ*, see note on 1 Tim. v. 17.)

Ver. 7.—*For the Lord shall give for and the Lord give*, A.V. Consider what I say. The apostle's lessons had been given in parables or similitudes. He therefore begs Timothy to note them well, lest the application to himself should escape him, suggesting further that he should seek the necessary wisdom and understanding from God. So our Lord, at the end of the parables recorded in Matt. xiii., says to his disciples in ver. 51, "Have ye understood all these things?" and elsewhere, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." **Understanding** (*σύνεσις*); one of the special gifts of the Spirit (Isa. xi. 2, LXX.; see Col. i. 9; ii. 2).

Ver. 8.—*Jesus Christ, risen from the dead for that Jesus Christ . . . was raised from the dead*, A.V.; *of the seed of David for Jesus Christ of the seed of David*, A.V. **Remember Jesus Christ**. The A.V. seems to give the sense more correctly than the R.V. The point of the exhortation is to remember that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, and by that remembrance to be encouraged to face even death courageously. The verb *μνημονεύω*, in the New Testament, usually governs the genitive case as e.g. Acts xx. 35; Gal. ii. 10. But in 1 Thess. ii. 9; Matt. xvi. 9; Rev. xviii. 5, it has an accusative, as here, and commonly in classical Greek. There seems to be hardly sufficient ground for the distinction mentioned by Bishop Ellicott, that with a genitive it means simply "remember," with the accusative "keep in remembrance." It is more difficult to determine the exact force and intent of the clause, "of the seed of David." It seems, however, to point to Christ's human nature, so as to make the example of Christ's resurrection apposite as an encouragement to Timothy. And this view is much strengthened by Rom. i. 3, where the addition, "according to the flesh," as contrasted with "the Son of God according to the Spirit of holiness," marks the clause, "of the seed of David," as specially pointing to the human nature of Christ. The particular form which the reference takes probably arises from the form to which the apostle refers us as "my gospel." In that creed, which was the epitome of the gospel as preached by St. Paul, there was no doubt mention made of Christ's Davidic descent.

Others, as Huther, think the clause points to the Messianic dignity of David. Others, that it is inserted in refutation of the Docetæ, and to show the reality of the death and resurrection of Christ; or that it is meant to mark especially the fulfilment of prophecy. But the first explanation is quite satisfactory, and the general purpose of the reference to our Lord as intended to encourage Timothy to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, is fully borne out by the "faithful saying" in vers. 11 and 12, "If we died with him, we shall also live with him; if we endure, we shall also reign with him."

Ver. 9.—*Hardship for trouble*, A.V.; *unto for even unto*, A.V.; *as a malefactor for as an evil-doer*, A.V.; transposition of clause, *unto bonds*. **Wherein** (*ἐν ᾧ*); i.e. in which gospel, in the preaching of which. **Suffer hardship** (*κακοπαθῶ*); as ver. 3, T.R. **Unto bonds** (*μέχρι δεσμῶν*). So *μέχρι θανάτου*, Phil. ii. 8; *μέχρι αἵματος*, Heb. xii. 4; but most frequently of time, "until," as Matt. xi. 23; xiii. 30; Acts x. 30, etc. **A malefactor** (*κακοῦργος*); as Luke xxiii. 32, 33, 39; common in classical Greek. **Bonds** (*δεσμῶν*); as Acts xxvi. 29; Phil. i. 7, 13, etc.; Col. iv. 18. So St. Paul calls himself *δεσμιος*, in respect of these bonds (Eph. iii. 1; iv. 1; ch. i. 8; Philem. 1, 9). **The Word of God is not bound**. A beautiful reflection of an utterly unselfish mind! The thought of his own bonds, likely soon to be exchanged for the bonds of a martyr's death, awakens the comforting thought, "Though they bind me with an iron chain, they cannot bind the gospel. While I am here, shut up in prison, the Word of God, preached by a thousand tongues, is giving life and liberty to myriads of my brethren of the human race. The tyrant can silence my voice and confine it within the walls of my dungeon; but all the while the sound of the gospel is going through all the earth, its saving words to the ends of the world; and I therein rejoice, yea, and will rejoice; and not all the legions of Rome can take this joy from me."

Ver. 10.—*Save for sakes*, A.V.; *also may for may also*, A.V. **Therefore** (*διὰ τοῦτο*); *for this cause*. Some (Wiesinger, Alford, etc.) refer this to what follows, viz. "that the elect may obtain the salvation," etc., after the model of 1 Tim. i. 16 and Philem. 15, where *διὰ τοῦτο* clearly refers to the words which follow. But the interposition of the words, *διὰ τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς*, is strongly adverse to this view. It seems, therefore, rather to refer collectively to all the considerations which he had just been urging upon Timothy, perhaps especially the last, of the resurrection of Christ, which he now again enforces by his own example of willing suffering in order that the elect may obtain

the eternal salvation which is in Jesus Christ—adding, in vers. 11 and 12, the encouragement to suffering derived from the “faithful saying.” I endure (*ὀπομένω*); the exact force of which is seen in the substantive *ὀπομονή*, patience, so frequently attributed to the suffering saints of God.

Ver. 11.—*Faithful is the saying for it is a faithful saying, A.V.; died for be dead, A.V. Died; i.e. in baptism (Rom. vi. 8), as denoted by the aorist. But the death with Christ in baptism is conceived of as carrying with it, as a consequence, the daily death of which St. Paul speaks so often (Gal. ii. 20; 1 Cor. xv. 31; 2 Cor. iv. 10), as well as the death to sin.*

Ver. 12.—*Endure for suffer, A.V.; shall deny for deny, A.V. and T.R. Endure; as ver. 10. Mark the present tense as distinguished from the aorist in ἀποδοῦμεν, betokening patient continuance in suffering. If we shall deny him (ἀποαρνήμεθα); comp. Matt. x. 30; Luke xii. 9; Acts iii. 13, 14, etc.*

Ver. 13.—*Are faithless for believe not, A.V.; he for yet he, A.V.; for he for he, A.V. and T.R. Are faithless (ἀπιστοῦμεν); meaning the same as the A.V. believe not, which is everywhere in the New Testament the sense of ἀπιστέω (Mark xvi. 11; Luke xxiv. 11; Rom. iii. 3, etc.). (For the contrast between man's unbelief and God's faithfulness, see Rom. iii. 3.) He cannot deny himself, by coming short of any promise once made by him (comp. Titus i. 2; Heb. vi. 18; x. 23, etc.). This and the two preceding complets in vers. 11 and 12 make up “the faithful saying” spoken of in ver. 11 (see 1 Tim. i. 15, note).*

Ver. 14.—*In the sight of for before, A.V.; to for but to, A.V.; them that hear for the hearers, A.V. Put them in remembrance (ὀπομύνησκε; John xiv. 26; Titus iii. 1; 2 Pet. i. 12). St. Paul skillfully strengthens his preceding exhortations to Timothy by now charging him to impress upon others—referring, perhaps, especially to “the faithful men” spoken of in ver. 2, but generally to the whole flock committed to him—the truths which he had just been urging upon Timothy. Charging (διαμαρτύρομενος); as 1 Tim. v. 21 and ch. iv. 1. Strive . . . about words (λογομαχεῖν); only here in the New Testament or elsewhere. But λογομαχία occurs in 1 Tim. vi. 4 and in late Greek. Another reading is λογομάχει, as if addressed to Timothy himself, but λογομαχεῖν is supported by the best authorities, and agrees best with the context. To no profit; literally, useful for nothing; serving no good purpose. Χρησιμῶν, which occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, is found repeatedly in the LXX., and is very common in classical Greek, where it is followed by εἰς, ἐπὶ, and πρὸς. The*

construction is “not to strive about words, a thing useful for nothing, but, on the contrary, tending to subvert those who hear such strife.” To the subverting (ἐπὶ καταστροφῇ); elsewhere only in 2 Pet. ii. 6, where it is used of a material overthrow, as it is in the LXX. of Gen. xix. 29, to which St. Peter is referring. The history of its use here of a moral overthrow, which is not borne out by its classical use, seems to be that the apostle had in his mind the very common metaphor of *οικοδομή*, edification, as the proper result of speaking and teaching, and so uses the contrary to “building up,” viz. an “overthrowing” or “destruction,” to describe the effect of the teaching of those vain talkers and deceivers (comp. ver. 18).

Ver. 15.—*Give diligence to present for study to show, A.V.; handling aright for rightly dividing, A.V. Give diligence. The A.V. “study,” if we give it its proper force, as in the Latin *studeo*, *studium*, *studiosus*, expresses the sense of σπουδασον exactly. Zeal, earnest desire, effort, and haste, are all implied in it (comp. ch. iv. 9, 21; Titus iii. 12; 2 Pet. i. 10, 15; iii. 14). To present thyself (παρστήσῃ, to present); as in Luke ii. 22; Acts i. 3; ix. 41. In 1 Cor. viii. 8 it has the sense of “to commend,” nearly the same as δόκιμον παρστήσῃ. The rendering, to show thyself, of the A.V. is a very good one, and is preserved in the R.V. of Acts i. 3. Approved (δόκιμον; Rom. xvi. 10; 1 Cor. xi. 19, etc.); one that has been tried and tested and found to be sterling; properly of metals. This, with the two following qualifications, “a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,” and “one that rightly handles the Word of truth,” is the character which Timothy is exhorted to appear in before God. The dative τῷ Θεῷ is governed by παρστήσῃ, not by δόκιμον. A workman (ἐργάτην). How natural is such a figure in the mouth of Paul, who wrought at his trade with Aquila and Priscilla (Acts xviii. 3), and was working night and day at Thessalonica, that he might earn his own living! That needeth not to be ashamed (ἀνεπισχυντον); not found anywhere else, either in the New Testament or in the LXX., or in classical Greek. Bengel hits the right force of the word when he renders it “non pudendum,” only that by the common use of the passive participial form (compare ἀνεπίχλιαστος, ἀνεπεινήνητος, ἀναρίθμητος, etc.), it means further “that cannot be put to shame.” The workman whose work is skimmed is put to shame when, upon its being tested, it is found to be bad, dishonest work; the workman whose work, like himself, is δόκιμος, honest, conscientious, good work, and moreover sound and skilful work, never has been, and never can be, put to shame. St. Paul shows how to secure its being good work,*

viz. by its being done for the eye of God. **Handling aright the Word of truth** (ὀρθοτομοῦντα τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας). The verb ὀρθοτομεῖν occurs only here in the New Testament. In the LXX., in Prov. iii. 6, it stands for "he shall direct [or, 'make straight'] thy paths;" and so in Prov. xi. 5. The idea is the same as that in Heb. xii. 13, "Make straight paths for your feet (τροχίας ὁρθὰς ποιήσατε)." But this does not at all suit the context. We must look, therefore, at the etymology of the word. ὀρθοτομέω must mean "to cut straight," and, as the apostle is speaking of a good workman, he must be thinking of some work in which the workman's skill consists in cutting straight: why not his own trade, in which it was all-important to cut the pieces straight that were afterwards to be joined to each other (see ὀρθότομος and ὀρθοτομία)? Hence, by an easy metaphor, "divide rightly," or "handle rightly, the Word of truth," preserving the true measure of the different portions of Divine truth.

Ver. 16.—*Profane for profane and vain, A.V.; proceed further in ungodliness for increase unto more ungodliness, A.V. Shun* (περιτράσω, as in Titus iii. 9); literally, *step out of the way of, or stand away from*—an unusual use of the word, found also in Josephus, 'Ant. Jud.,' iv. vi. 12. Profane babblings (see 1 Tim. iv. 7; vi. 20). They will proceed (προκόψουσιν); see note on προκοπή in 1 Tim. iv. 15. Further in ungodliness (ἐπὶ πλείον ἀσεβείας); surely better rendered in the A.V. *to more ungodliness*. It may be questioned whether "they" refers to the babblings or to the false teachers. It makes very good sense to say, "Avoid these profane babblings, for they won't stop there—they will grow into open impiety and blasphemy." But ver. 17, as Alford observes, is in favour of the "teachers" being the subject of "will proceed;" but it is not conclusive. If a full stop be put after "ungodliness," as in the A.V., ver. 17 comes in quite naturally with the further statement that "their word will eat as doth a gangrene."

Ver. 17.—*Gangrene for canker, A.V. Their word; as opposed to "the Word of truth" in ver. 15. Will eat* (νομῆν ἔξει); i.e. spread, like a gangrene, which gradually enlarges its area, corrupting the flesh that was sound before. So these heretical opinions spread in the body of the Church which is affected by them. Νομή is literally "pasture" (John x. 9), "grazing of flocks," and hence is applied to fire (Polybius), which as it were feeds upon all around it, and, in medical language (Hippocrates), to sores and gangrenes, which grow larger and depasture the flesh. Of whom; of the number of those pointed at in the phrase,

"their word." **Hymæus**; probably the same person as is mentioned as a blasphemer in 1 Tim. i. 20. Philletus. Nothing is known of him.

Ver. 18.—*Men who for who, A.V. Have erred* (ἡσάχησαν); see 1 Tim. i. 6 (note) and vi. 21. In Matt. xxii. 29 and in Mark xii. 24 our Lord's word for "erring" is, πλανᾷσθε. It is remarkable that it was the subject of the resurrection which was so misunderstood in both cases. The heretics to whom St. Paul here alludes probably explained away the resurrection, as the Gnostics in the time of Irenæus and Tertullian did (Huther), by spiritualizing it in the sense of Rom. vi. 4; Eph. ii. 1; Col. ii. 12; i. i. 1, etc. It is the usual way with heresy to corrupt and destroy the gospel, under pretence of improving it. And there are always some weak brethren ready to be deceived and misled. **Overthrow** (ἀνατρέπειν); elsewhere in the New Testament only in Titus i. 11; but common in LXX. and in classical Greek.

Ver. 19.—*Howbeit for nevertheless, A.V.; firm foundation of God standeth for foundation of God standeth sure, A.V.; this for the* (1611 copy), A.V.; *the Lord for Christ, A.V. and T.R.; unrighteousness for iniquity, A.V. The firm foundation of God standeth; i.e., though the faith of some is thrown down like a wall built with untempered mortar, the foundation which God has laid fast and firm stands unmoved and unmovable. This is equally true of individual souls, (the αἱ στερεαὶ ψυχὰι of Chrysostom), and of the Church, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. Compare our Lord's saying, when the Pharisees were offended at him, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up" (Matt. xv. 13); and those in John x. 28, 29; and 1 John ii. 19. Θεμέλιος in classical Greek is always an adjective agreeing with λίθος expressed or understood. In the New Testament it is used only as a substantive (Luke vi. 48; 1 Cor. iii. 10; 1 Tim. vi. 19, etc.). Here the word seems to be employed, not so much to denote a foundation on which a house was to be built, as to denote strength and solidity. The elect of God are like foundation-stones, which may not be moved. **Having this seal.** In Rev. xii. 14 the twelve foundation-stones of the new Jerusalem were each inscribed with the name of an apostle. In like manner there are inscriptions, of the nature of seals, on God's strong foundations, showing their immutable condition. One is, "THE LORD KNOWETH THEM THAT ARE HIS," taken verbatim from the LXX. of Numb. xvi. 5; the other is, "LET EVERY ONE THAT NAMED THE NAME OF THE LORD DEPART FROM UNRIGHTEOUSNESS." This is nowhere to be found in the Old Testament.*

The first part of the verse is indeed equivalent to *Kύριε . . . τὸ ὄνομα σου δομῶμεν* in Isa. xxvi. 13, but there is nothing to answer to the second part. The passages quoted by commentators from Numb. xvi. 26 and Isa. lii. 11 are far too general to indicate any particular reference. Possibly the motto is one of those "faithful sayings" before referred to. The two inscriptions, taken together, show the two sides of the Christian standing—God's election, and man's holiness (comp. 1 John i. 6; iii. 7, 8).

Ver. 20.—*Now for but, A.V.; unto for to, A.V. (twice). Now in a great house, etc.* "Now" is hardly the right conjunction. It should rather be "howbeit." The object of the figure of the various vessels in the "great house" is to show that, though every one that names the Name of the Lord ought to depart from unrighteousness, yet we must not be surprised if it is not so, and if there are found in the Church some professing Christians whose practice is quite inconsistent with their profession. Perhaps even the vilest members of the visible Church perform some useful function, howbeit they do not mean it. With this mention of the vessels, compare the enumeration in 1 Cor. iii. 12. Of earth (*ὀστράκινα*); only here and 2 Cor. iv. 7, where it is also applied to *σκεῦη*, "earthen vessels;" as it is in the LXX., e.g. Lev. vi. 28; and to *ἄγγος* (Numb. v. 17). "ὀστράκον" is "a tile." (For the same figure, see Rom. ix. 22, 23.)

Ver. 21.—*Meet for and meet, A.V. and T.R.; prepared for and prepared, A.V. Purge himself from these (ἐκκαθάρη);* stronger than the simple *καθάρη*, "thoroughly purge himself," as in 1 Cor. v. 7 (the only other place in the New Testament where it occurs) and as in classical Greek. It is used also by the LXX. in Judg. vii. 4, as the rendering of *קָרַץ*, to try metals. The idea, therefore, seems to be that of *separation*, and, if so, "from these" may certainly mean from the false teachers described under the image of the vessels unto dishonour, as usually explained. At the same time, the image is better sustained if we understand "from these" to mean the babblings, and ungodliness, and eating words of the heretics denounced. It is hardly natural to imply that one vessel in the house will become a golden vessel by purging itself from the wooden and earthen vessels. Neither is separation from the false teachers the point which St. Paul is here pressing, but avoidance of false doctrines. *Meet for . . . use (εὐχρηστος)*; only here and ch. iv. 11 and Philem. 11. Also Prov. xxix. (xxx.) 13, LXX. Common in classical Greek. *The master (τῷ δεσπότῃ)*; the master of the house, the *οικοδεσπότης*.

Ver. 22.—*But flee for flee also, A.V.; and follow after for but follow, A.V.; love for*

charity, A.V. Youthful (νεωτερικὸς); of or belonging to *νεώτεροι*, young men; "cupiditates adolescentiæ" (Tacit., 'Hist.' i. 15). The word only occurs here in the New Testament, never in the LXX., but is found in Josephus, who speaks of *αἰθαδέλα νεωτερική*, "youthful arrogance," and is common in classical Greek. Lusts (*ἐπιθυμίαι*) include, besides the *σαρκικαὶ ἐπιθυμίαι* of 1 Pet. ii. 11, all those ill-regulated passions to which youth is peculiarly liable, such as intemperance, love of company, arrogance, petulance, ambition, love of display, levity, vehemence of action, wilfulness, and the like. Timothy at this time was probably under forty (see note on 1 Tim. iv. 12, and Ellicott on ditto). Follow after (*δίωκε*); as 1 Tim. vi. 11, where, as here, it is in contrast with *φείγε*. Eagerness in pursuit, and difficulty in attainment, seem to be indicated by the word. *With them, etc. (μετὰ τῶν ἐπικαλουμένων, κ.τ.λ.).* "With them" may mean either pursue righteousness, etc., in partnership with all who call upon the Lord; i.e. make the pursuit of righteousness, etc., your pursuit, as it is that of all who call upon the Lord; or it may be construed with *εἰρήνην*, so as to limit the exhortation to peace to those who call upon the Lord, *εἰρήνην μετὰ τῶν ἐπικαλουμένων*, "peace with those that call," etc., which is the construction in Heb. xii. 14 and Rom. xii. 18. It is, however, remarkable that in both these passages, which are referred to for the grammar, the inference from the doctrine goes rather the other way, as they teach "peace with all men." So does the balance of the sentence here.

Ver. 23.—*Ignorant questionings for unlearned questions, A.V.; refuse for avoid, A.V.; gender for do gender, A.V. Ignorant (ἀπαιδεύτους);* only here in the New Testament, but not uncommon in the LXX. applied to persons, and in classical Greek. *Unlearned* is quite as good a rendering as *ignorant*. It is a term applied properly to ill-educated, ill-disciplined people, and thence, by an easy metonymy, to the questions such persons delight in. *Questionings (ζητήσεις);* see 1 Tim. i. 4, note, and Titus iii. 9. *Refuse (παράτρων);* "have nothing to do with" (see 1 Tim. iv. 7; Titus iii. 10). *Gender (γεννώσι).* This is the only place in the New Testament where *γεννώσι* is used in this metaphorical sense, unless Gal. iv. 24 is included. (For the sentiment, see 1 Tim. vi. 4, "Whereof cometh envy, strife," etc.) *Strifes (μάχας);* compare *μάχας νομικὰς*, "fightings about the Law" (Titus iii. 9); and "wars and fightings" (Jas. i. 2). Compare, too, the verb *λογονμαχεῖν*, in ver. 14. Nothing can be more emphatic than St. Paul's warnings against foolish and angry controversies about words, and yet nothing

has been more neglected in the Church, in all ages.

Ver. 24.—*The Lord's servant for the servant of the Lord, A.V.; towards all for unto all men, A.V.; forbearing for patient, A.V.* The Lord's servant (δοῦλον Κυρίου). So St. Paul repeatedly describes himself (Rom. i. 1; Gal. i. 10; Phil. i. 1; Titus i. 1), as do also the apostles James, Peter, Jude, and John (Jas. i. 1; 2 Pet. i. 1; Jude 1; Rev. i. 1). The term seems, therefore, especially (though not exclusively, Eph. vi. 6; 1 Pet. ii. 16; Rev. xix. 2, 5; xxii. 3) to describe those whose office it is to preach the gospel, either as apostles or as ministers (Col. iv. 12). Must not strive (μάχεσθαι); a conclusive reason against engaging in those foolish and ignorant questionings which necessarily engender strife. Gentle (ἡπιον); only here and in 1 Thess. ii. 7, where we see how St. Paul carried this precept into practice. A nurse does not meet the child's waywardness by blows or threats, but by gentleness and love. It is a classical word. Apt to teach (see 1 Tim. iii. 2, note). Forbearing (ἀνεξίκακον); only here in the New Testament, not found in the LXX., and only in late Greek. It means literally "bearing up against ill treatment," patiently enduring it.

Ver. 25.—*Correcting them for instructing those, A.V.; peradventure God for God peradventure, A.V.; may for will, A.V.; unto the knowledge for to the acknowledging, A.V.* Correcting (παιδεύοντα, παιδεύειν means properly to "educate," "bring up," or "train" a child. Hence sometimes the idea of teaching predominates, sometimes that of correcting or chastising. Here the context shows that the idea of teaching is predominant—partly because the word suggests something contrary to the ἀπαίδευτοι ζητήσεις of ver. 23, and partly because the end of this παιδεία is to bring them to the knowledge of God's truth. The A.V. "instructing" is therefore the right word here. Them that oppose themselves (τοὺς ἀντιδιαιθεμένους); only here in the New Testament or the LXX., or in classical Greek. Literally, those who arrange or set themselves in opposition; or, in one word, "opponents," referring, no doubt, chiefly to such ἀντιλέγοντες as are mentioned in the very similar passage, Titus i. 9 (see too Titus ii. 8). If peradventure (μήποτε). "Μήποτε, in later Greek, loses its aversative meaning ('lest at any time'), and is almost equivalent to εἴποτε" (Alford, *in loc.*)—equivalent to "in case God should," etc. Repentance (μετανοία); such a change of mind as shall lead them to embrace the truth. Knowledge (ἐπίγνωσις); almost invariably used of the knowledge of God or of God's truth (ch. iii. 7; Rom. i. 28; Eph. i. 17; iv. 13; Col. i. 9, 10;

iii. 10; Titus i. 1; Heb. x. 26, etc.). The truth; that truth which before they set themselves to oppose, disputing against it and resisting it. The servant of the Lord must never despair of any one, never throw an additional obstacle in any one's way by roughness or harsh speech, and never allow unkind feelings to be roused in his own breast by the perverseness or unreasonableness of them that oppose themselves to him.

Ver. 26.—*They for that they, A.V.; having been taken captive by the Lord's servant unto the will of God for who are taken captive by him at his will, A.V.* Having been taken captive, etc. This is undoubtedly a difficult passage. We will first take the individual words, and then turn to the general meaning. Recover themselves (ἀναήψωσιν); only found here in the New Testament, and never in the LXX. In classical Greek, where it is, however, uncommon, it means literally "to recover from drunkenness," hence, "to come to one's self," "to come to a right mind" (see Steph., 'Thes.'). Snare (παγίς); as 1 Tim. iii. 7; vi. 9. Compare the use of παγιδεύω (Matt. xxii. 15). Having been taken captive (ἐζωγράμηναι); only found in the New Testament in Luke v. 10 besides this place, but common in the LXX. and in classical Greek, in the sense of "to take alive," of prisoners of war, who, if not ransomed, always became slaves of the conqueror. Here, therefore, the meaning is "having been captured and enslaved." By him (margin), (ὑπ' αὐτοῦ); i.e. of course the devil, who had just been named as having ensnared them. Unto the will of him (margin), (ἐκείνου θέλημα). The difficulty of the passage lies in the word ἐκείνου, which at first sight seems to indicate a different antecedent from the antecedent of αὐτοῦ. This grammatical difficulty has led to the strange rendering of the R.V., and to the wholly unjustifiable intrusion into the text of the words, "the Lord's servant" and of "God," producing altogether a sentence of unparalleled awkwardness and grotesqueness, and utter improbability. But there is no real difficulty in referring ἐκείνου to the same person as αὐτοῦ (meaning in both cases the devil), as in the passage from Plato's 'Cratylus,' cited by Huther, after De Wette, the cause of the use of ἐκείνου being that St. Paul was at the moment emphasizing the fact of these captives being deprived of their own will, and made subservient to the will of another. The passage may be paraphrased: "If peradventure God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth, so as to recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, after they had been led captive by him, so as to be no longer their own masters, but obliged to do his will."

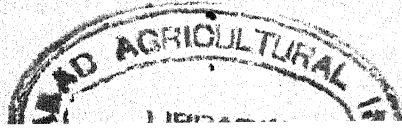
The implied contrast is *οὐ τὸ ἐαυτῶν ἀλλ' ἐκείνου θέλημα*, just as in the passage from the 'Cratylus,' p. 430 (vol. iv. p. 306, Bekker's edit.), *ἐκείνου* is contrasted with *γυναικός*. The full passage is *Δεῖξαι αὐτῷ ἂν μὲν τύχη ἐκείνου εἰκόνα, ἂν δὲ τύχη, γυναικός*. Another example of the transition from *αὐτός* to *ἐκείνος* is in John i. 7, 8, *Οὗτος ἦλθεν εἰς μαρτυρίαν, ἵνα μαρτυρήσῃ περὶ τοῦ φωτός, ἵνα πάντες πιστεύσωσι δι' αὐτοῦ· οὐκ ἦν ἐκείνος τὸ φῶς, κ.τ.λ.*, where there is a contrast between John as the witness and Christ as the true Light (compare, too, John iv. 25, where *ἐκείνος* has the force of "not you, but he"). For the general turn of phrase, comp. 2 Cor.

x. 5, "Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ," where *αἰχμαλωτίζοντες* (see ch. iii. 6) corresponds to *ἐξωγρημένοι*, and *εἰς τὴν ὑπακοήν τοῦ Χριστοῦ* to *εἰς τὸ ἐκείνου θέλημα*. It should be noted further that the sentence is certainly rather a peculiar one, from the use of such uncommon words as *ἀναγῆφω* and *ζωγρέω*, and the mixture of metaphors. But the sense of the A.V. is fully borne out. The interpretation preferred by Bishop Ellicott is "they may recover themselves from the snare of the devil unto his will (viz. God's), having (previously) been led captive by him (viz. the devil)."

HOMILETICS.

Vers. 1—14.—*Endurance the lot of Christ's ministers.* Continual endurance of evil, whether directed specially against himself, or generally thwarting the cause which he has most at heart, is the ordinary lot of the minister of Jesus Christ exercising his ministry in an evil world. And in order to be ready to encounter this evil, actively or passively, as the case may require, a complete concentration of purpose on the fulfilment of his ministry is absolutely required. If the heart is divided between the ministry of God's Word and the enjoyment of an easy life, there will be a constant temptation to avoid those various forms of "hardship" which properly belong to the campaign of the soldiers of Christ. Troubles will be shirked rather than endured; and ministerial duties will be made to stand on one side when they interfere with the inclinations of the moment. Labour will be evaded when the soul calls for ease. The determined struggle, and the sturdy stand against evil, whether in his own heart or in the world around him, will be postponed to a more convenient season, while weak compromises and sinful compliances take their place in the immediate present. At the same time, contradiction and opposition, crooks and crosses of various kinds, untoward events, troubles, disappointments, and difficulties of all sorts, will be met, not in the spirit of Christian fortitude, not in the spirit of Christian meekness and patience, but with petulant complaints, or with roughness and ill temper, as running against the current of the love of ease in the soul. It is, therefore, incumbent upon the servant of God to be wholly given up to the ministry which he has received. He must resolutely shake off the entanglements of the affairs of this life, that he may please him who called him to be a soldier. He must feel, "My work in life, my mission, the dispensation committed to me, is to advance the kingdom of Christ in the world. I am set by my Lord and Master for the defence of the gospel—to preach it, to vindicate it, to uphold it against all gainsayers, to adorn it with my own life, to use my utmost endeavour for its maintenance, its propagation, its triumphs. I must no more shrink from obloquy, from labour, from suffering, from troubles, or, if need be, from bonds and death, in the fulfilment of this work and ministry, than the soldier shrinks from fatigue and exposure, from hunger and hardship, from wounds and from death, in bravely discharging the duties of his warfare." For his encouragement in carrying out this resolve, he has the example of his Lord who suffered unto death and was raised again from the dead. He has the example of the apostles who endured troubles and bonds and imprisonment, and yet saw the gospel which they preached triumphing over all opposition. He has the promises of God assuring life, and a kingdom, to those who suffer and die with Christ. And so, accepting endurance as the portion of Christ's servants, he pursues his ministry diligently, joyfully, and steadfastly, throws his whole strength into it, and looks forward with an unwavering hope to obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

Vers. 15—26.—*The skilful workman.* Besides the concentration of purpose, and the willingness to endure, which are necessary to the faithful minister of Christ, two



other qualifications are no less needed. The one is skill in his work; the other is gentleness and patience in dealing with those that oppose themselves. By skill in his work we mean both the knowing what to avoid and shun, and the effective handling of the Word of truth. The minister of Christ who wastes his time, and spends his strength in foolish and unlearned questions and profane babblings; who strives about words to no profit; who dabbles with philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, and not after Christ; who intrudes into things which he hath not seen, bringing in strange doctrines and carnal ordinances, and laying burdens upon the consciences of his hearers, which God has not laid;—however earnest he may be, and however willing he may be to endure trouble in defence of his teaching, is not a workman approved unto God, or one that needeth not to be ashamed of his work. He builds upon the foundation hay and stubble, instead of gold and costly stones. But the skilful workman shuns this. He will not allow himself to be enticed into unprofitable controversies, or fritter away his zeal upon things of no moment. But he bends all the powers of his mind to divide rightly the Word of truth. Holy Scripture is his model. What is made much of in Scripture he makes much of in his teaching. He endeavours to preserve the relative proportion of doctrines which he finds in the inspired pages; to treat of doctrine and of practice in the same way that they are treated of in the Word—to speak as do the oracles of God. His aim is neither to exaggerate nor to attenuate; to speak soberly, but not to speak coldly; to say nothing that ought not to be said, and to leave unsaid nothing that ought to be said. Thus will he be a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, “rightly dividing the Word of truth.” The other qualification is scarcely less important. “The Lord’s servant must not strive.” He must meet contradiction, opposition, gainsaying, with gentleness, meekness, and love. The voice of his Master was not heard in the street, lifted up in anger, or crying out in wrangling and disputes. He neither reviled his revilers nor threatened his persecutors. His servant must be like him. Loving, forbearing, patient, apt to teach, with a burning desire to save his opponents, he must go on his work, despairing of none, wearied out by none, praying for all, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and bring them out of the captivity of sin into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Ver. 1.—Exhortation to Timothy to be strong. The apostle founds upon the foregoing examples and warnings an admonition to Christian firmness and courage.

I. THE NEED OF SPIRITUAL STRENGTH. “Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.” 1. *Strength was necessary to meet the difficulties and dangers of his official life at Ephesus.* 2. *The admonition was probably needed on account of the discouragements which Timothy himself must have felt at the conduct of the Asiatic deserts.* 3. *Strength is the spring of happy activity in any sphere.* “The joy of the Lord shall be your strength.”

II. THE SOURCE OF THIS SPIRITUAL STRENGTH. “The grace that is in Christ Jesus.” It seems strange to say, “Be strong,” to a spiritually discouraged man, as it would be strange to say the same thing to a physically weak man. The injunction is reasonable, however, when we consider that the source of our renewed power is at hand. The grace of Christ is the inward power which enables us “to will and to do of his good pleasure.” “Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might” (Eph. vi. 10). Here lies the true source of our strength. The apostle declared he could do all things through Christ who strengthened him.—T. C.

Ver. 2.—Admonition to Timothy respecting the appointment of faithful preachers. At such a period of unfaithfulness and timidity, it was necessary to provide for the continuous wants of the Church.

I. THE TRUST TIMOTHY IS TO DELIVER TO FAITHFUL MEN. “The things which thou heardest from me among many witnesses.” 1. *Timothy heard these things from the apostle at his ordination, but often still during his long missionary travels, when he would hear the apostle discourse to large and varied congregations of both Jews*

and Gentiles. 2. *The substance of his preaching would be the grand outlines of Pauline theology*, as they are exhibited in the Epistles, Jesus Christ being the central theme. 3. *There is nothing here to countenance the Roman idea of tradition*, as if Timothy was to transmit a body of oral instruction to the latest generations, through successive generations of teachers. The instructions in question are actually contained in the Scriptures, and are no longer committed to the doubtful custody of human memory.

II. THE PERSONS TO WHOM THE TRUST WAS TO BE COMMITTED. "The same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." 1. *Timothy was to judge of their qualifications*. They were not to judge of their own fitness; they were not to find their place as teachers by self-appointment. 2. *Their ordination in itself was to be no qualification*; for they might possibly have been wholly destitute of teaching gifts. There is nothing in the passage to justify the idea of apostolic succession. 3. *Their qualifications were to be twofold*. (1) Faithfulness; for "a steward of the mysteries of God" must be faithful, not betraying the charge committed to him, declaring the whole counsel of God, and keeping back nothing that is profitable. (2) Teaching power. "Who shall be able to teach others also." The bishop must be "apt to teach," with a true understanding of the Scriptures, a gift of explication, and a faculty of edifying speech.—T. C.

Vers. 3—7.—*The apostle bespeaks from Timothy a copartnership in affliction, which would have its due reward*. I. THE DUTY OF SUFFERING HARDSHIP IN THE GOSPEL. "Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ." 1. *The minister is a soldier of Christ, enrolled by him, trained by him, armed by him, supported by him, as the Captain of our salvation*. The ministry is a warfare, involving, not only the "good fight of faith," but an increasing struggle against false teachers. 2. *As a good soldier, he must be prepared to suffer hardships*. Like the soldier, he must often leave home and friends, expose himself to cold and hunger and fatigue; he must fearlessly meet the enemies of his Lord, and die, if need be, in the arms of victory. 3. *The apostle strengthens his admonition by an appeal to his own hardships and sufferings*. Timothy took a sympathetic interest in the career of the greatest of the apostles. The tried veteran appeals to the young soldier.

II. ENCOURAGEMENTS TO BE DRAWN FROM THE DUTIES AND REWARDS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. There are three pictures presented to our view—one military, another agonistical, and another agricultural. 1. *The supreme unembarrassed devotion of the soldier to his commander*. "No one that serveth as a soldier entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who enrolled him to be a soldier." The Roman soldier was isolated by express law from all trades and interests and agencies that would interfere with the discipline of his profession. (1) The minister who is supremely concerned about the affairs of the next life must stand free from the entanglements of human occupation, so as to devote his whole energies without distraction or dispersion of thought to the business of his Master. The apostle had himself occasionally to resort to industry for his own support, under circumstances of a purely exceptional nature; but he demands an extrication of the ministry from all secular engagements in his elaborate plea to the Corinthians (1 Cor. ix.). (2) His sole motive is to please the Master who enrolled him in this service. It is not to please himself, or to please men by seeking ease, or emolument, or social position, but to please the Lord Jesus Christ, in whose book of life his name is written. 2. *The severe training and lawful striving of the athlete in the games*. "But if any one also strive in the games, he is not crowned unless he have striven lawfully." The figure was a familiar one to the people of that age who dwelt in cities. (1) It is implied that ministers, in striving for the crown of life, must strip off all encumbrances—"laying aside every weight"—that they may the more easily press to the mark, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. (2) It implies that they must undergo the discipline of severe training to fit themselves for the work of ministry, and carry on their service according to the high laws of the kingdom of Christ. 3. *The reward of the labouring husbandman*. "The labouring husbandman must needs first partake of the fruits of his labour." (1) This does not mean that the husbandman would be the first to partake of the fruits, but that he must first labour before he obtained the reward. There is evidently an emphasis on the fact that a laborious

husbandman was the most fully entitled to reward. (2) The minister of Christ must plough and sow before he can reap; he must use all laborious diligence in his calling, not discouraged because he does not at once see the fruits of his labour, for the seed may not sprout up quickly, but ever looking upward for the dews of Heaven's grace to descend upon the wide field of his ministry.

III. THE DUTY OF GIVING CONSIDERATION TO ALL THESE FACTS. "Consider what I say, and the Lord will give thee understanding in all things." 1. *It is the Lord only who can give us a true insight into both doctrine and duty.* 2. *Those who enjoy this Divine help are under the greatest obligation to use their understandings upon the highest of all themes.*—T. C.

Vers. 8.—*The contemplation of Christ an incentive to comfort and constancy.* Timothy was to think of Christ's victory for himself and for us as a ground of encouragement.

I. CHRIST THE PERPETUAL OBJECT OF CHRISTIAN REMEMBRANCE. "Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel." The two great facts that were to be ever present to Timothy's mind were the Incarnation and the Resurrection—the two miracles that stood, respectively, at the beginning and the end of his earthly history. The one would speak of the hopes of the race of man springing from the Saviour's assumption of our nature in the royal line of David; the other of the completeness of the redemption sealed by the resurrection from the dead. Timothy would be encouraged to bear his trials by the thought of Christ's victory over death.

II. CHRIST THE PERPETUAL THEME OF THE GOSPEL. "According to my gospel." 1. *These two facts are fundamental in the gospel.* Take them away, there is no hope for man, no atonement, no blessed life hereafter. 2. *These two facts needed to be taught in an age when false teachers denied a real incarnation, saying that the Saviour had a phantom-body, and a real resurrection, because a bodily resurrection was not to be thought of, as matter, being essentially evil, could not attach to a Divine being.*—T. C.

Vers. 9, 10.—*The example of the apostle's own sufferings—their spiritual motive and design.* I. TIMOTHY WAS TO BE ENCOURAGED BY THIS EXAMPLE. "Wherein I suffer hardship unto bonds as a malefactor." He was now a prisoner at Rome, because he preached the gospel of Jesus and the resurrection, and suffered as much as if he had been a breaker of all laws, human and Divine.

II. THE APOSTLE'S IMPRISONMENT DID NOT IMPOSE FETTERS UPON THE GOSPEL. "But the Word of God is not bound." This was said for the encouragement of Timothy, who may have feared that the Roman imprisonment would be fatal to the progress of the gospel. *The apostle, though a prisoner, had liberty to add many pages to that Word of God which Nero could not bind, for we have no less than three or four prison-Epistles in the canon of inspiration.* The imprisonment of John Huss in a fortress on the Rhine gave him leisure to write the truth he could no longer proclaim with fiery lips to the Bohemians. The Wartburg seclusion of a year gave Luther the leisure to translate the Scriptures for his German countrymen. Verily the Word of God is not bound.

III. THE MOTIVE OR DESIGN OF THE APOSTLE'S SUFFERINGS. "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." 1. *The zealous minister of Christ thinks no sufferings too great that are needed for the sake of God's elect.* The apostle's life was one long career of labour and affliction on their behalf. 2. *Ministers must labour for the salvation of the elect.* Human instrumentality is clearly recognized and honoured in this great work. Paul, Apollos, and Cephas were "ministers by whom the Corinthians believed." 3. *There is a salvation provided for the elect.* They are "chosen in Christ" before the foundation of the world "unto holiness" (Eph. i. 4). 4. *The salvation is only to be obtained in and through Jesus Christ.* 5. *It is a salvation that finds its true termination in "eternal glory."*—T. C.

Vers. 11—13.—*A faithful saying for consolation and for warning.* The apostle

introduces the familiar formula, "This is a faithful saying," with its rhythmical significance and arrangement, to emphasize the importance of what is to follow.

I. FAMILIAR TRUTHS WITH A CONSOLATORY ASPECT. "If we died with him, we shall also live with him; if we endure, we shall also reign with him." There is here an expressive climax, setting forth two different aspects of the union between Christ and his people. 1. *Identification with Christ in his death.* All believers died with him, as their Head and Representative, and thus died to sin, through the efficacy of his death, so as to be planted together in the likeness of his death; and thus, being made conformable to his death, they have fellowship with him in his sufferings. 2. *But identification with Christ in his life follows as a consequence of this identification in death,* because we rose with him from the dead, to be planted in the likeness of his resurrection, that we should walk in newness of life; and thus, being made alive unto God, we live a life of holiness and sanctification with him (Rom. vi. 5-8). 3. *Identification with Christ in endurance involves identification in his reigning glory.* Believers who suffer shame and loss and outrage for Christ's sake shall reign with him in glory hereafter, as they reign in the kingdom of grace with him now; for they are "a kingdom of priests," destined for everlasting glory (Rev. i. 6).

II. FAMILIAR TRUTHS WITH A THREATENING ASPECT. "If we deny him, he also will deny us; if we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; for he cannot deny himself." 1. *The denial of Christ is fatal.* It is to reject the only Saviour. Some deny his Messiahship; some deny his Divinity; some deny him by their works, being ashamed of him and refusing to confess him; some deny him by open apostasy. In all these cases the denial involves our Lord's denial of them (Matt. vii. 23; x. 23). 2. *Our unbelief does not affect the essential faithfulness of Christ.* "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful." 1. *This does not mean that he will save us whether we believe in him or not;* for he has just said that if we deny him he will also deny us, and faith is always an essential condition of salvation. 3. *It means that he will abide faithful to his word of threatening,* as well as to his nature and perfections; for he cannot falsify his declarations that "he that believeth not shall be condemned" (Mark xvi. 16). He will say to apostates in the last day, "I never knew you." It would be to deny himself to act otherwise. He cannot consistently with his character regard faith and unbelief as the same thing. Thus the apostle stimulates Timothy to fidelity by an exhibition at once of the bright and the dark sides of Divine truth.—T. C.

Ver. 14.—*An injunction to put Ephesian believers in remembrance of these truths.* This begins a new portion of the Epistle.

I. CHRISTIAN PEOPLE NEED TO BE REMINDED OF THE TRUTH IN ALL ITS ASPECTS. "Put them in remembrance of these things." 1. *We are apt to forget the consolatory aspect of truth under the pressure of present trial,* as worldly men are apt to forget its threatening aspect under the absorbing worldliness of their lives. 2. *The Lord has made provision, to "put us in remembrance,"* through the ministry and through the Word of God, to which we do well to take heed as to a light shining in a dark place.

II. CHRISTIAN PEOPLE NEED TO BE WARNED AGAINST RUINOUS STRIFES ABOUT WORDS. "Solemnly charging them in the sight of the Lord, not to contend about words, to no profit, to the subverting of them that hear." 1. *There are many religious controversies which turn rather upon words than upon things,* and thus involve a waste of intellectual energy. These "strifes of words" were characteristic of the false teachers (1 Tim. vi. 4). 2. *There is nothing in the passage to warrant a disregard for "the form of sound words,"* for the "wholesome words" of the Lord Jesus, which cover things as well as thoughts. 3. *The apostle condemns a wrangling about terms which brings no advantage to truth,* but rather tends to the subversion of the hearers, misleading their judgments and overturning their faith. Simple-minded people might begin to doubt the truth of a gospel about which contending controversialists were so much at variance. Unsettling of mind is dangerous, while it lays an arrest on all earnest work.—T. C.

Ver. 15.—*The qualifications of the gospel-preacher.* "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed."

I. HE MUST BE LABORIOUS. The term "workman" implies this fact as well as the direct admonition to "give diligence" to his ministry. The ministry is a good work, demanding

industry, study, and care, and no man is sufficient for it without the grace of God. It is a comfort as well as an honour to think that ministers are "workers with God" (1 Cor. iii. 9).

II. THEY MUST SEEK GOD'S APPROVAL IN THEIR WORK. They must not study to please men, else they will not be the servants of Christ; but they must approve themselves to God, showing all good fidelity, and commend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

III. THEY MUST WORK WITH A SINCERITY AND EFFICIENCY THAT WILL NOT BRING SHAME UPON THEMSELVES. The negligent, or unskilled, or ignorant workman will produce work which may well put him to shame. But the true workman loves to produce good and abiding work, such as will stand the fiery test of the last day (1 Cor. iii. 13). He may often feel his insufficiency; but he will never be ashamed of the gospel, nor of his sufferings, nor of his faithful ministrations of the Word.

IV. HE MUST HAVE SKILL IN THE USE OF THE WORD OF GOD. "Handling aright the Word of truth." 1. *His one book, his one weapon, his one interest, is the Divine Word.* His mind, his heart, his will, must be concentrated upon this Word. It must form the matter of his preaching, the mould of his thoughts, the inspiration of his imagination. 2. *He must be able to handle it aright, with due regard for the authority of God, to its own intrinsic claims, and to the welfare of the souls of men.* He must be able to "divide it aright," distributing to babes in Christ and to full-grown men according to their capacities and their circumstances; he must not pervert it or wrest it from its true sense; he must not keep back anything that is profitable, but declare the whole counsel of God. He must not wander to the right or left, but keep a straight course forward in the path of truth.—T. C.

Vers. 16—18.—*A warning against vain babblings, with their tendency to heresy and impiety. "But shun profane babblings."*

I. THE DUTY OF THE MINISTER TOWARD SUCH BABBLINGS. He is to shun them, because they are profitless—a mere sound of words, without solid meaning; great swelling words of vanity, not only unprofitable, but contrary to the doctrine that is according to godliness. The minister must shun, discourage, and repudiate them in the interests of truth and piety.

II. THE TENDENCY OF SUCH BABBLINGS. "They will proceed further in ungodliness." The allusion is not to the babblings, but to the false teachers. 1. *There is a close connection between lax doctrine and a loose life.* The error of the false teachers had not yet appeared in its fully developed form, but its true moral tendency was clearly foreseen from the first. 2. *There is a tendency in false teachers to carry their principles to their last logical results.* They have thrown off the checks of authority and conscience; they have been emboldened, perhaps, by a temporary success; and so they insist on wresting the whole Scripture to their own destruction as well as that of others.

III. THE EFFECTS OF SUCH FALSE TEACHING. "And their word will eat as doth a gangrene." 1. *It will spread further and further.* (1) Through the subtlety of seducers; (2) through the unwary simplicity of Christian professors; (3) and as a judicial infliction upon such as, possessing no love of the truth, receive delusion to believe a lie. 2. *It will have corrupting and destroying effects.* The strong figure of the apostle sets the matter in an impressive light.

IV. THE RING-LEADERS OF HERESY. "Of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus; men who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some." 1. *The leading apostles of error.* (1) It is a solemn thought that the Spirit of inspiration has given an immortality of infamy to these two names. If they were ambitious of notoriety, they have gained it far beyond the extent of their expectations. (2) Hymenæus is evidently the person referred to already (1 Tim. i. 25), whom the apostle had "delivered unto Satan;" but he seems to have profited in no way in the interval by the severe discipline applied to him. Of Philetus nothing is known. It is a Greek name, but it occurs in Roman inscriptions. 2. *The nature of their error.* Their principal error, which is mentioned, was a denial of the resurrection in its true sense. (1) They probably perverted the words of the apostle himself when he spoke of a spiritual resurrection (Rom. vi. 4, etc.; Col. ii. 12), of which they could say truly enough that "it was past already;" but they denied a resurrection of the body,

which was just as expressly taught by the same apostle. (2) The error had its origin in the Greek philosophy, which regarded matter as essentially evil, and as therefore unworthy to share in the ultimate glorification of the redeemed. 3. *The injurious effects of their error.* "And overthrow the faith of some." (1) The doctrine of the resurrection is founded on the resurrection of Christ, which is the foundation-doctrine of Christianity. Those errorists seem to have touched with unholy hands this corner-stone of Christian hope. (2) The influence of the errorists, evil as it was, was only partial. It only affected "some;" but even this thought was a sad one to the apostle.—T. C.

Ver. 19.—*The comfort amidst abounding apostasy.* Though some turn away from the truth, God's Church stands firm in its grand integrity.

I. THE CHURCH OF GOD IN ITS EVER-DURING STABILITY. "Howbeit the firm foundation of God standeth." 1. *The Church is very properly called a foundation*, because it is placed in the world as the platform on which the whole future household of faith is to rest (Eph. ii. 20). Christ is the Corner-stone of the foundation. 2. *It stands firm from age to age on its unshaken foundation*, notwithstanding all the efforts made to destroy it. It was to be the constant witness to the truth amidst all error and apostasy.

II. THE CHURCH OF GOD WITH ITS TWOFOLD INSCRIPTION. "Having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his; and, Let every one that nameth the Name of the Lord, depart from unrighteousness." It was an ancient custom to engrave upon a building, an inscription which told of its origin and purpose. The names of the apostles were written in the twelve foundations of the apocalyptic city of God (Rev. xxi. 14). The Church has a seal with a double inscription, which displays the true character of the edifice. 1. *One inscription is the legend of comfort and hope.* "The Lord knoweth them that are his." What a comfort there is in the thought of this individualizing knowledge! What a hope there is in the thought that the saints are God's "purchased possession"! 2. *Another inscription is the legend of duty.* "Let every one that nameth the Name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness." There is no place for unrighteousness in the Church of God. Therefore believers must separate themselves from all evil.—T. C.

Vers. 20, 21.—*The Church in its visible aspect before the world.* The apostle seems to be answering the question why there are such unworthy members in the visible communion of the Church.

I. THE CHURCH IS LIKE A GREAT HOUSE WITH VARIOUS SORTS OF VESSELS. "Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some unto honour, and some unto dishonour." 1. *It is contended that the great house here is not the Church, but Christendom, that is, all that calls itself Christian, because the Church consists only of saints.* 2. *It is the Church, however, of which the apostle is speaking in the context*, and not the world; but whereas in the last verse it was the invisible Church, it is here the Church visible—that is, the Church in the aspect it presents to the world. The distinction between the Church visible and the Church invisible is clearly recognized in Scripture. The one represents the Church as it is seen by God; the other, as it is seen by man. The one represents the Church as to its true idea and constitution; the other, as it has appeared in the world as a mixed communion. The Church visible appears like a great house with two distinct kinds of vessels—some very precious and durable, others comparatively valueless, easily and soon broken. There are vessels for honour and vessels for dishonour. The idea is much the same as that of the drag-net in the parable (Matt. xiii. 47—49).

II. THE DUTY OF SEPARATION FROM THE VESSELS OF DISHONOUR. "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, meet for the Master's use, prepared unto every good work." The thought of separation from the false teachers was, no doubt, uppermost in the apostle's mind, but it has a wider scope. 1. *It is our duty to withdraw from error.* This withdrawal may be effected in several ways. The apostle says to Timothy, "From such withdraw thyself" (1 Tim. vi. 5); he says to Titus, "A man that is a heretic avoid" (Titus iii. 10). The separation may take place by the heretic being cast out of communion; or avoided in the intercourse of life; or, in the last resort, the believer may withdraw himself from the society

which fails to cast him out. Or the believer may be called upon to "purge himself"—terms which seem to imply personal defilement in a separate walk of holiness and purity. He must purge himself from heresy and impurity. 2. *The right dedication and destination of the vessel for honour.* (1) He will become "sanctified," in its double sense—consecrated to God and walking in the purity of a separated life. (2) He will be serviceable to the Master of the house in all the various ministries to which he may be called. (3) He will be prepared unto every good work. Unlike the unwise and the evil man, who is to all good works reprobate, he is, as created in Christ Jesus unto good works, enabled to run in the way of the Lord's commandments.—T. C.

Ver. 22.—*The importance of a pure and circumspect walk.* I. NEGATIVELY. "Flee youthful lusts." 1. *These refer to those passions and desires which are so tempting to youth.* They "war against the soul," and are most inimical to holiness and salvation. The indulgence of corrupt passions would also lead to serious scandals. 2. *They refer likewise to those vehement and headstrong passions which often lead young men into foolish courses,* or to the rage for novelty and the egotistic vanity which so often lead to religious errors like those of Hymenæus and Philetus.

II. POSITIVELY. "Follow after righteousness, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." 1. *Righteousness.* Fidelity in all human relations especially, but a right manner of life. Believers are: (1) To yield their members as instruments of righteousness (Rom. vi. 13). (2) To be armed with righteousness as a breast-plate (Eph. vi. 14). (3) Righteousness tends to life (Prov. xi. 19). (4) It brings its own reward (Prov. xi. 18). (5) Its effect is quietness and assurance for ever (Isa. xxxii. 17). 2. *Love.* Love to all men. (1) It is of God (1 John iv. 7). (2) It is taught by God (1 Thess. iv. 9). (3) It is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. v. 22). (4) It ought to be an active and abiding principle (Heb. vi. 10; 1 Cor. viii. 13). (5) The greatest sacrifices are nothing without it (1 Cor. xiii. 3). 3. *Peace.* (1) Its nature and advantages (a) It springs from heavenly wisdom (Jas. iii. 17). (b) It is necessary to the enjoyment of life (1 Pet. iii. 10, 11). (c) There is a blessing for the peacemaker (Matt. v. 9). (2) Its objects. "Them that call upon the Lord out of a pure heart." That is, believers. We are to endeavour to have peace with all men (Rom. xii. 18). But we are to seek the peace of the Church (Ps. cxxii. 6—8)—of those who worship Christ with all purity of heart, as contrasted with those "whose mind and conscience are defiled" (Titus i. 15).—T. C.

Ver. 23.—*A warning against contentious questionings.* I. THE MINISTER OF CHRIST MUST AVOID INAPT DISCUSSIONS. "But foolish and ignorant questions avoid." The false teachers wasted their energies upon questions of this class, because they had no just idea of the relative importance of truth, taking small things for great and great things for small. The matters in dispute were useless and unedifying, being foreign to the true wisdom of the gospel. Four times in these two Epistles does the apostle repeat this grave warning.

II. THE TENDENCY OF SUCH DISCUSSIONS. "Knowing that they do gender strifes." They break the peace of Churches, alienate the hearts of ministers, and impede the progress of the gospel.—T. C.

Vers. 24—26.—*The importance of ministers cultivating a peaceful and forbearing spirit.* I. THE TRUE TEMPER OF THE MINISTER OF CHRIST. 1. *Negatively.* "The servant of the Lord must not strive." This does not mean that (1) he is not to contend earnestly for the faith (Jude 4); but (2) that he is not to fight about trifles, nor to argue with acerbity of temper, nor for mere victory. The "bond of peace" must be maintained in controversy. 2. *Positively.* (1) "But be gentle unto all men;" cultivating a spirit of habitual conciliation, while using arguments of the greatest cogency. (2) "Apt to teach;" showing capacity and disposition to instruct the ignorant and the obstinate. (3) "Patient;" bearing with the infirmities of weak brethren, with the irritating oppositions of adversaries, and with the reproaches of evil men generally. (4) "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves" to the truth as it is in Jesus, thwarting or perverting the gospel. The minister must be ready to instruct such persons in a meek

and humble spirit, because they may be ignorant, or ill-informed, or deeply prejudiced from the circumstances of their early training.

II. THE BENEFITS THAT WILL ACCRUE FROM SUCH METHODS OF INSTRUCTION. "If God peradventure will give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth, and they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by the Lord's servant unto the will of God." 1. *A meek and gentle address may bring such errorists to repent of their sin and accept the true doctrine of faith.* It is possible to repel them by our harsh reproaches. We ought rather to show them the truth without passion, and enforce it with all the kindly urgency of true affection. The necessity of repentance in such a case marks the essentially sinful character of opposition to the truth. 2. *The servant of the Lord may be the means of recovering out of error as well as sin.* (1) Error is the devil's snare as well as sin, for it leads downwards to sin. It acts like a stupefying drink. (2) Some errorists awake out of their intellectual intoxication, if they are wisely dealt with, and open their eyes to the blessed truth of the gospel. (3) The will of God once established in such hearts, as the guiding principle of life, completes the recovery from error.—T. C.

Ver. 3.—*Culture of strength.* "Endure hardness." We are all endangered by ease and self-indulgence. The soft south wind of worldly comfort enfeebles us. Dangerous, for to the soldier nerveless strength is death; and the great campaign requires on our part energy and courage all through.

I. IT IS HARD TO SUBJUGATE THE PRESENT WORLD. In the fourth verse Paul speaks of the "affairs of this life," in which Timothy, like the rest of us, was in danger of "being entangled;" and unquestionably, apart from evil, the innocent side of the present life is most attractive to us, in all its forms of pleasure-seeking and outward prosperity and honour.

II. IT IS HARD TO SUFFER REPROACH AND SHAME. How hard only those know who have felt the constant irritant of a relentless persecution for righteousness' sake. "I suffer trouble," says Paul, "as an *evil-doer*." And this was the great trial of the early Christians—not merely "bonds and imprisonments, but the calumnies which made them the scorn of men. The grace of God can sustain us in all our tribulations; but it requires "hardness" to "*endure as seeing him who is invisible*" when the character is subjected to human scorn and hatred.—W. M. S.

Ver. 21.—*Fitness for service.* "Meet for the Master's use." Christ is our Lord as well as our Saviour. We are under a *Master*, and must bring our thought in captivity unto him.

I. MEETNESS. For in man there is a power that grows by culture. Not so with the inferior animals. Take the bee: the first cell it makes is as geometrically perfect as the last. So take the bird: the first nest it makes is as soft and complete as the last. But man can grow in meetness. *Self-discipline* meetens. *Sorrow* meetens. *Suffering* meetens.

II. MINISTRATIONS. *Use.* This characterizes all the works of God. The river is not only a silver thread running through the landscape; it brings freshness and verdure, and the cattle come to the banks to drink, and there is emerald verdure by the river-side. Ships, too, float on its waters. We are to be of *use* to the Master. He deigns to use us. "Son, go work to-day in *my* vineyard." Many in this age dislike the word "Master;" but we are always under some master, consciously or unconsciously. We *serve* God or Mammon, and we cannot serve both. We are to attend to spiritual means of grace, and to seek out modes of service, so as to be of use to the Master.—W. M. S.

Vers. 1—13.—*Hardship in connection with the Christian ministry.* I. PRELIMINARY EXHORTATION. 1. *As to personal strength.* "Thou therefore, my child, be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." As the apostle's power of working was already much crippled by close imprisonment, he naturally felt anxious regarding the future of Christ's cause. In calling Timothy his son, he does not formally name him as his successor. At the same time, he may be regarded as looking to him as one like-minded, who had youth on his side, to continue the work which he felt was passing out of his hands. While Phygelus and Hermogenes were untrue to him, and Onesiphorus was

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dead, Timothy must stand forward. For this he would require a liberal supply of strength. With paternal anxiety, then, he points him to the great Source of strength, viz. the grace that is in Christ Jesus and obtained by him for us, or the lordly power to bless without respect to the merit of the recipient. In John i. 14 he is said to be full of grace, and, in the sixteenth verse following, it is said that it is out of his fulness that all his people receive. As the Fountain, he supplies all that depend upon him with all that is necessary for the proper discharge of their duties. To whom else, then, could he point Timothy? In spiritual work there is a giving-out of strength, for which there is needed renewal. There are also occasions for which there are needed special supplies of strength. At all times there is a tendency to a culpable and enfeebling supineness, against which there is needed a gracious supply. Let the Christian minister, then, find his empowering for his work in the grace that is centred in Christ. 2. *As to the regular transmission of the truth.* "And the things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." Paul himself heard directly from Christ, who is as full of truth as of grace. But he points to a definite and solemn occasion, when he was the speaker and Timothy the hearer, viz. the occasion, repeatedly referred to, of Timothy's ordination. What he heard then was by the mediation of many witnesses, i.e. the presbyters who were present at his ordination, and laid their hands on him, and who, by the part they took in it, gave their attestation to the charge. What Timothy received then has repeatedly been called his deposit, or talent of the catholic faith. This, in turn, he was to commit to trusty men, i.e. men who could be entrusted with the keeping of the deposit. They, in their turn, were to teach others, so that they also could be entrusted with the deposit. Thus there was to be a regular succession of teachers for the handing-down of the truth. There is a place assigned to tradition here; but, as it is made to depend on the trustworthiness of each individual in the chain of succession, we must think of a tradition that is to be tested by Scripture. At the same time, there is a handing-down of Scripture truth with traditional associations embodying the Church's thinking out of the truth, and, if this is what it ought to be, then it is important that it should be handed down by means of a regular succession of teachers. All encouragement, then, is to be given to the proper education of young men for the ministry; and yet a theological institution will fail of its end unless there is the proper keeping up of the Church's life, which is needed to influence the right class of young men to devote themselves to the ministry.

II. THE CHRISTIAN MINISTER IS TO BE PREPARED FOR HARDSHIP. *Three figures suggestive of hard service.* 1. *The soldier.* "Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier on service entangleth himself in the affairs of this life; that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier." The soldier, above others, has to have his mind made up to experiencing hardship. He has to leave home and friends. He may have to encounter hardships on the march. He has especially to face the hardships and dangers of the battle-field, "seeking the bubble reputation, even in the cannon's mouth." So the Christian minister is, in a special manner, a soldier of Christ Jesus. He is one whom Christ has in a solemn way bound to himself. He has to fight under Christ and for Christ in an unfriendly world; and he need not be surprised if he is called upon to experience the hardships of a soldier. Let Timothy, then, willingly, nobly, take his part along with Paul and other soldiers of Christ. But the apostle draws attention to a special condition of excellence in a soldier. He does not entangle himself in the affairs and businesses of this life. In choosing to be enrolled under a commander, he leaves his former employment behind. He is henceforth at the will of his commander for whatever hard service he may need him. Especially does this condition apply to a soldier on service. Before entering on a campaign, he would need even to have family affairs arranged, that he may give himself up undistractedly to the service required of him. Only thus can he expect to approve himself to his commander. The Christian minister is in the same way to be unentangled with businesses, which he leaves to others. Paul was not always able to free himself from the necessity of making his own bread; but it is advisable that a minister should be left free in this respect, and it is wrong for him unnecessarily to divide his energies, or to mix himself up with what can be better done by others. For it is only when his mind is thoroughly undistracted and absorbed in service that he can approve

himself to the great Commander. 2. *The athlete.* "And if also a man contend in the games, he is not crowned, except he have contended lawfully." The Greeks were great admirers of physical perfection. Even their men of genius, like Plato, engaged in athletic contests on public occasions. Great encouragement was given to the athletic art. The successful athlete was crowned under very inspiring circumstances. There were many subordinate rules to be observed by the athlete, but the great rule was to go through a course of very hard preparation. Only thus could he expect to be crowned when the occasion of the games came round. The minister is, in the same way, to aim at efficiency in his art. He has many examples of this placed before him. And there is great encouragement given by that royal Personage who is to preside on the occasion of award. The successful minister is to be crowned. There are many subordinate rules to be observed by him, but the great rule is that he is to subject himself to severe discipline. Only thus can he expect to have a fadeless crown for efficiency in the ministerial art. 3. *The husbandman.* "The husbandman that laboureth must be the first to partake of the fruits." The husbandman has to extract bread from the unwilling ground; and he may have to do this under unfavouring conditions of weather. He has need, then, for hard and persistent labour, especially in the season of spring. In the sweat of his face he has to prepare the soil and put in the seed. It is only the husbandman that thus exerts himself that comes to the front in the time of fruit. He is eating of the new corn, when the husbandman who has not exerted himself is far behind. In the same way the minister has to extract good products from unwilling hearts, and not always under favouring conditions from without. Hard work is needed to prepare the soil and to put in the seed. If he engages in hard work, he has the prospect of the farmer, viz. the fruit of his own labour. He will have joy in those for whom he has laboured—partly in this world, chiefly in the next world. It is the minister who does not grudge hard service that comes to the front in the enjoyment of fruit, while he who gives grudging service lags behind in the reward. *Appended call to attention.* "Consider what I say; for the Lord shall give thee understanding in all things." What Paul said was easily understood; but it needed to be thoroughly weighed so as to become spiritual strengthening to Timothy. It plainly meant that he was to set himself to hard work, and that he need not expect easy outward conditions of working; when the mind is made up to it, the hardest work is often felt to be light. This was a lesson which he wished Timothy to learn, with the Lord's promised and all-sufficient assistance.

III. ENCOURAGEMENTS UNDER HARDSHIP. 1. *Example of Christ.* (1) *Victorious aspect of Christ's resurrection.* "Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead." Paul's principal encouragement is to go back in memory upon the historical Jesus at the *victorious point of his history.* He seemed to be utterly defeated in death. His body was laid in the tomb, a stone rolled against the mouth of it and sealed, and a watch set; and the rulers thought they had conquered. Could he be released from the power of death and the grave? Let not the most distressed, the most maltreated of men, despair; for it was when Christ seemed to be utterly defeated that he victoriously got for his people victory over sin and over death and the grave. (2) *His resurrection culminating in his present mediatorial dignity.* "Of the seed of David, according to my gospel." As of the seed royal, he was raised, and raised to sit upon the throne of his father David. That is the high position he has won for himself. The government of the universe is at this moment upon his shoulders. Under all outward defeat, then, let us enter into the spirit of the victorious termination of our Lord's career of suffering. 2. *Example of Paul.* (1) *Appearance of defeat.* "Wherein I suffer hardship unto bonds, as a malefactor." He had not yet resisted unto blood. But though he had not gone the length of the Master, he had gone the length of bonds, and, with his Master, was numbered with the transgressors. (2) *Promise of victory.* "But the Word of God is not bound." Not only was his conviction strong that the Word proceeding from God could not be bound by any tyrant, but he had the fact to lay hold of that much freedom was enjoyed in the preaching of the Word. (3) *Victorious for the sake of the elect.* "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." God has appointed for the elect the salvation which is in Christ Jesus. It is a salvation which is to blossom forth under a sunnier sky into glory. This glory will be ample com-

pensation for present sufferings, not only in its quality, but in its being eternal. How, then, was he to help forward the destiny of the elect, and at the same time his own destiny? He could not preach in his dungeon; but he could follow up the preaching of others by a brave bearing. He could show that he could act what he had preached. And did not much depend on his going forward bravely to martyrdom? 3. *A saying of the martyr-times.* "Faithful is the saying." (1) *How the Christians encouraged one another to constancy! Past act.* "For if we died with him, we shall also live with him." They first went back to a definite act in the past, viz. the profession of faith with which they commenced their Christian career. They thus in *obligation* came up to the martyr-point. They said they were willing, should the Master call them to it, to share death with him. If this was the true reading of their act, the bright side of it was that they would also be called to share life with Christ. *Abiding state.* "If we endure, we shall also reign with him." They next thought of their present suffering calling for an abiding spirit of endurance, and they used to say to one another, that, if they did not flinch, their future would be brightened to them by their being called to sit with Christ on his throne. (2) *How the Christians discouraged one another against apostasy! Future act.* "If we shall deny him, he also will deny us." They next thought of their being put to a severe test in the future. The time might come when their choice would be between Christ and life. Far be it from them, for the sake of life, to deny Christ; for that act of denial on their part would carry with it an act of denial on his part. *Abiding state.* "If we are faithless, he abideth faithful; for he cannot deny himself." They next thought of an act of denial followed by no penitence, and they said to one another, that if that was their permanent state, their future would be darkened, even by reason of the unchanging character of their Saviour. It was impossible for him to contradict himself, and, as surely as he shows his approval of faith, must he show his disapproval of unbelief. The martyr-times had already commenced. The first persecution was under Nero in the year 64, the last under Diocletian in the year 303. The first persecution had not yet ceased. The Christians, charged with setting fire to Rome, were subjected to the most inhuman treatment. As the historian Tacitus informs us, they were sewn in sacks made of the skins of wild beasts, and thrown to be torn by dogs. They were smeared with pitch, and set on fire as torches to illuminate the imperial gardens at night. "This persecution extended beyond the walls of Rome, and continued with more or less severity to the end of Nero's reign, four years afterwards." It was in the last year of Nero's reign that Paul was now awaiting his martyrdom. This martyr-saying may be viewed as the fruit of those years of persecution. As here incorporated by Paul into this Epistle, it would be a precious legacy to the Church in the many years of persecution to come.—R. F.

Vers. 14—26.—*Conduct in view of heresy appearing in the Church.* I. METHOD OF THE HERETICS. "Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them in the sight of the Lord, that they strive not about words, to no profit, to the subverting of them that hear." The method of the heretics called for solemn warning from Timothy. Its essential character was *word-fighting*. It dealt with the form, and not with the reality; and so it came to be controversial. The word is not unimportant, but it has no importance apart from its being the vehicle of the truth. The moral defect of the method was its want of regard to edification. The disputants only used it for dialectic display. There was, therefore, no good result to be laid to their account. The only result to be expected was the subversion of any who, by hearing, placed themselves within their influence.

II. THE TRUE METHOD. "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the Word of truth." The heretics sought to be approved unto them that heard them, for their skill in word-fighting. Timothy was to follow another course, and to display his zeal in quitting himself so as to be approved unto God. The way in which he was to do this was by answering to the idea of a workman. He was not to amuse himself with profitless disputation, but he was to give profitable work. He was to work with such rigorous regard to the Divine rule that, whether he met with approval or disapproval from men, he did not need to be ashamed. Especially was he to show the better way of dealing with the Word. He was to cut rightly, or cut straight, the Word of truth. Whatever

the metaphor is, there can be no doubt that the idea is that, instead of trifling with the Word, he was to go right into and lay open the Divine truth it contained.

III. WHY THE METHOD OF THE HERETICS WAS TO BE AVOIDED. "But shun profane babblings: for they will proceed further in ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a gangrene." The method of the heretics is characterized in keeping with what has been already said. It was using empty speech, or speech without reference to reality. That, applied to Divine things, was necessarily profane. Its natural association was God-dishonouring representations, operating against devout feelings and corresponding practice. This ungodly tendency had not taken its worst form. The heretics would yet say worse things. Their word was of the nature of a gangrene, that eats into the life, and, always in an aggravated form, spreads over the spiritual body.

IV. TWO HERETICS NAMED. "Of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus; men who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some." The way in which these men were heretics, or darted aside from the truth as the mark, was by applying the method described to the doctrine of the resurrection. Under the influence of an incipient Gnosticism, in which the body was regarded as evil, they got rid of the reference of the resurrection to the body by quibbling about the word. The word was simply "rising again," and its meaning was sufficiently met by what had already taken place in a Christian believer, viz. the rising of the soul to newness of life. With their verbal skill, they were succeeding in the case of some. But what was success to these dialecticians was to those with whom they succeeded nothing less than the subversion of their faith, so essential is the resurrection of the body to Christianity.

V. THE STABILITY OF THE CHURCH. "Howbeit the firm foundation of God standeth." Though the faith of some is overturned, the Church standeth. The Church is not thought of as a *completed structure*, which it will not be till ages still have passed. But it is thought of as a *substructure* in a satisfactory state, as having, indeed, been laid by God. It had that firmness which is essential for the commencement of a building. As firm, it was standing, notwithstanding the strain to which it had been subjected. As firm, it promised to stand a long time, and the promise has not been belied. For upon the foundation part of the building much has been laid since, and we have no reason to fear its overthrow, but rather increased reason to anticipate its completion. *The Church is a structure in connection with which there is solemn engagement.* "Having this seal." *The seal on the substructure has two sides.* 1. *The obverse, or Divine side.* "The Lord knoweth them that are his." The language from this point to the close of the twenty-first verse seems to have been suggested by a memorable passage in Jewish history, recorded in the sixteenth of Numbers, viz. the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. These men charged Moses and Aaron with taking too much upon them in acting, the one as prophet by pre-eminence and the other as priest by pre-eminence. The reply of Moses, as given in the Septuagint, was that God knew them that were his, i.e. would maintain their cause against opposers, as he did signally in that case, in causing the earth to open and swallow up these men and their company. 2. *The reverse, or human side.* "And, Let every one that nameth the Name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness." The Jewish congregation was composed of them that named the Name of God, i.e. that professed to worship him as the Most Holy One, and to obey his commands. In the case referred to, the Divine call to the whole congregation was, "Depart from the tents of those wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins." The application is the following: Let Timothy be comforted by the thought that the Lord would judge between him and such opposers as Hymenæus and Philetus, who would not be able to move the substructure that had been laid. On the other hand, let Christian congregations be warned. They are composed of those who name the Name of the Lord, i.e. profess faith in Christ as their Saviour, and promise obedience to his laws. In the Christian religion, even more than in the Jewish religion, unrighteousness appears as receiving terrible condemnation. Let not, then, a Christian have anything to do with departure from the truth and fellowship with ungodliness.

VI. MIXED SOCIETY. "Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some unto honour, and some unto dishonour." In the Jewish Church (which is called the house of God) there were faithful and unfaithful, with degrees of faithfulness and degrees of unfaithfulness, compared here,

the one class to vessels of gold and of silver, and the other class to vessels of wood and of earth—vessels put to honourable uses and vessels put to dishonourable uses. In the former class were Moses and Aaron, and in the latter class Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, as shown in the day of trial. The Christian Church is also a great house, presided over, as we are told, not by a servant, but a Son. "And Moses indeed was faithful in all God's house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were afterward to be spoken; but Christ as a Son, over God's house; whose house are we, if we hold fast our boldness and the glorying of our hope firm unto the end." The Church is meant to be a *pure society*, but it is impossible under present conditions to have this realized to the fullest extent. In the apostolic circle around Christ there were vessels of gold and vessels of silver—of superior use and of inferior use in the service of the Master; but there was also shown to be a vessel of more than ordinary baseness of material put to the most dishonourable use. In the Church as it was forming there were men and women with gold and silver in their natures, "who having lands or houses sold them and laid the prices down at the apostles' feet;" but there were also Ananias and Sapphira, whose earthliness moved them to keep back part of the price. So while Paul was of gold use, we may say, at that period of the Church's history, and Timothy comparatively of silver use, Hymenæus and Philetus belonged to the other category, having nothing better than wood in them, and put to no honourable use.

VII. PURGATION. "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, meet for the Master's use, prepared unto every good work." There was a purgation of the congregation of Israel in connection with the rebellion that has been referred to. Every Israelite was to get up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; that was the condition of his being classed among the pure—of his being, according to the language formerly used, a vessel unto honour. We may think of the censers used by the two hundred and fifty of Korah's company; their sacredness was recognized by their being taken out of the fire, and put to another sacred use. "The censers of those sinners against their own souls, let them make them broad plates for a covering of the altar." The same thing has to take place in the Christian Church. A member of a Christian congregation is not to have fellowship with such subverters as Hymenæus and Philetus were, or with those, whether subverted or not as to creed, who engage in ungodly practices. He is not even to throw himself into the society of the merely indifferent. Thus only can he be a vessel unto honour. *Three things are said about him who is a vessel unto honour.* They turn upon the idea of usefulness; for that is essential to a vessel. The *first* has reference to an act of consecration. The *second* has reference to a use the Master has for the vessel. The *third* has reference to a course of preparation for the use. Christians are *set apart* to holy uses. This is partly their own act, in the dedication of themselves to God; and partly the Divine act in the sprinkling of the blood of Christ and anointing of the Holy Ghost. There is a *use* the Master has for every Christian. This use may be said to be (distributively) *every good work*. A Christian can be turned to more uses than a particular kind of vessel. It rather needs all kinds of sacred vessels to express his usefulness. His *preparation*, then, is no simple matter; it cannot be carried through in a day or a year. In and through experience, embracing our own exercise of soul and the Divine blessing, we acquire habits for various kinds of service, which are not always in actual requisition, but may at any time be in requisition. Let us, then, be in such a state of preparation that the Master of the house can, as it were, take us up, and use us for whatever work he has to be done.

VIII. PURE FELLOWSHIP. "But flee youthful lusts, and follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." In this punctuation peace is not specially connected with what follows. The idea is certainly, even from the context, pure fellowship. Timothy was to act his part well in the Christian society with which he was connected. He had yet youth on his side, and, while that had its large possibilities of service, it had also its risks. It had fiery impulses, from which even a youthful minister was not exempt, and by giving way to which the Christian society would be seriously injured. Let him flee to a distance from his peculiar temptations; on the other hand, let him be in close pursuit of the virtues on which pure fellowship depends. There is that universal virtue, *righteousness*, which may be thought of as the observance of the Divine rules. Then there is *faith*, or reliance

on promised strength. Then there is *love*, or proper regard for the common or individual good. There is, lastly, *peace*, or the keeping up of cordial intercourse and co-operation with brethren. The society by which he has to do his duty is regarded as composed of "them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." All the more that some called on the Lord without the pure heart must he be faithful to the terms of communion with all who, in good faith, were servants of the Lord.

IX. TREATMENT OF OPPOSERS. 1. *Avoidance of controversy with them.* "But foolish and ignorant questionings refuse, knowing that they gender strifes." The apostle does not say all questionings; for some might arise from honest difficulties, and these deserved to be met. But he says such questionings as were *foolish*, i.e. betrayed no honest struggle after the truth, and such as were *ignorant*, i.e. betrayed ignorance of the position questioned. Such questionings as, arising from *egoism*, did not deserve to be met, and the proper course was to have nothing to do with them. For they could not gender conviction, but petty strifes, in which the contest is not for the truth, but for personal or party victory. 2. *The arts of gentleness with them.* "And the Lord's servants must not strive, but be gentle towards all, apt to teach, forbearing, in meekness correcting them that oppose themselves." The Lord's servant, such as Timothy was in a special sense, was not to strive. For how in that way could he be the servant of him who did not strive, nor cry, nor let his voice be heard in the streets? What became the Lord's servant was to practise the arts of gentleness towards all. His part was, not to fight but to teach, not to be fiery under opposition, but to be patient. In accordance with his being a teacher and not a mere disputant, he was to communicate knowledge of the truth, by way of correcting false impressions to those who opposed themselves; and, in doing so, he might expect provocation, but in the character of the Lord's servant he was to exhibit meekness. 3. *Object aimed at.* "If peradventure God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth, and they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by the Lord's servant unto the will of God." The interpretation which is introduced into the Revised Translation in the concluding words is not likely to find acceptance. There is a strong characterization of the opposers. They are in the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by *him* at the will of *that person* whose will, it is hinted, is decided enough for evil. The grammatical objection holds no more in Greek than in English; the thought is the badness of their case, for whom notwithstanding he asks efforts to be made. In connection with these efforts it was not impossible for God to grant them repentance, that change of moral disposition which was necessary to the right appreciation of the truth, and thus to recover them as from a state of spiritual intoxication, and to bring them out of the devil's snare. The Lord's servant is not soon to give up, but is to hope on, even with those who seem to be the devil's willing tools.—R. F.

EXPOSITION.

CHAPTER III.

Ver. 1.—*But know this for this know also, A.V.; grievous for perilous, A.V.* Grievous times (*καιροὶ χαλεποὶ*). "Grievous" is not a very good rendering. "Perilous," though in some contexts it is a right rendering, is a little too restricted here. "Difficult," "trying," "uneasy," or the like, is nearer the sense. They are times when a Christian hardly knows which way to turn or what to do. He has to live under a constant sense of hindrance and difficulty of one sort or another.

Ver. 2.—*Self for their own selves, A.V.; lovers of money for covetous, A.V.; boastful for boasters, A.V.; haughty for proud, A.V.; railers for blasphemers, A.V.* Men (*οἱ*

ἄνθρωποι); men in general, the bulk of men in the Church; for he is speaking, not of the world at large, but of professing Christians. Lovers of self (*φιλαντοὶ*); only here in the New Testament, and not found in the LXX.; but used by Aristotle in a striking passage (quoted by Alford), where he distinguishes those who are *φιλαντοὶ* in a good sense, and those who are justly blamed for being *φιλαντοὶ*, i.e. selfish and greedy. The Christian character is exactly the opposite (see 1 Cor. x. 24: xiii. 5). Lovers of money (*φιλάργυροι*); elsewhere in the New Testament only in Luke xvi. 14, though not uncommon in classical Greek; *φιλαργυρία* is found in 1 Tim. vi. 10. Boastful (*ἀλαζόνες*); as Rom. i. 30, and in classical Greek. If the derivation of the word is *ἄλγῃ*, wander-

ing, we may compare the περιερχόμενοι of Acts ix. 13, "vagabond Jews." Such vagabonds were usually boasters. Hence ἀλαζών came to mean "a boaster." **Haughty, railers.** Περρηφάνια and βλασφημία are coupled together in Mark vii. 22; and περηφάνους and ἀλάζονας in Rom. i. 30. In the New Testament βλασφημία and βλασφημία are most commonly used of evil-speaking against God and holy things; but not always (see Eph. iv. 31; Col. iii. 8; 1 Tim. vi. 4). Here apparently it means generally "evil-speakers." **Unthankful** (ἀχάριστοι); as Luke vi. 35. Found occasionally in the LXX., and common in classical Greek. The ingratitude which they showed to their parents was a part of their general character. We ought to take special note of this passive sin—the not being thankful for good received from God and man. **Unholy** (ἀνόσιοι); as 1 Tim. i. 9 (where see note).

Ver. 3.—Implacable for truce-breakers, A.V.; slanderers for false accusers, A.V.; without self-control for incontinent, A.V.; no lovers of good for despisers of those that are good, A.V. Without natural affection (ἁσποργοί); as in Rom. i. 31, where in the T.R. it is coupled with ἁσπονδοί, as here. The verb στέργω is "to love," used primarily of the natural affection of parents to their children and children to their parents. And στήνῃ is that natural love. These persons were without this στήνῃ, of which Plato says, "A child loves his parents, and is loved by them;" and so, according to St. Paul's judgment in 1 Tim. v. 8, were "worse than infidels." **Implacable** (ἁσπονδοί); only here according to the R.T., not at all in the LXX., but frequent in classical Greek. ἁσπονδή was a solemn truce made over a libation to the gods. ἁσπονδος at first merely expresses that anything was done, or any person was left, without such a truce. But, in a secondary sense, applied to a war, it meant an internecine war admitting of no truce; and thence, as here, applied to a person, it means "implacable," one who will make no truce or treaty with his enemy. The sense "truce-breakers" is not justified by any example. **Slanderers** (διάβολοι); as 1 Tim. iii. 11 and Titus ii. 3. The arch-slanderer is ὁ διάβολος, the devil, "the accuser of the brethren (ὁ κατηγορὸς τῶν ἀδελφῶν)" (Rev. xii. 10; see John vi. 70). **Without self-control** (ἀκρατεῖς); here only in the New Testament, not in the LXX., but frequent in classical Greek, in the sense of *intemperate* in the pursuit or use of anything, e.g. money, the tongue, pleasure, the appetite, etc., which are put in the genitive case. Used absolutely it means generally "without self-control," as here rendered in the R. V. The A. V. "incontinent" (comp. 1 Cor. vii. 5) expresses only one part of the

meaning (see ἀκρασία, Matt. xxiii. 25). **Fierce** (from *ferus*, wild, savage); ἀνήμεροι; only here in the New Testament, and not found in the LXX., but frequent in the Greek tragedians and others, of persons, countries, plants, etc.; e.g. "Beware of the Chalubes, for they are savage (ἀνήμεροι), and cannot be approached by strangers" (Æschylus, *Prom. Vinet.*, 734, edit. Scholef.). It corresponds with ἀνελεήμονες, unmerciful (Rom. i. 31). **No lovers of good** (ἀφιλάγαθοι); only here in the New Testament, and not at all in the LXX. or in classical Greek. But φιλάγαθος is found in Wisd. vii. 22, and in Aristotle, in the sense of "lovers of that which is good;" and in Titus i. 8. The R. V. seems therefore to be right in rendering here "no lovers of good," rather than as the A. V. "despisers of those which are good," after the Vulgate and the new version of Sanctes Pagninus.

Ver. 4.—Headstrong for heady, A.V.; puffed up for high-minded, A.V.; pleasure for pleasures, A.V.; rather for more, A.V. Traitors (προδοταί); Luke vi. 16; Acts vii. 52. It does not mean traitors to their king or country, but generally betrayers of the persons who trust in them, and of the cause of the trust committed to them; perhaps specially, as Bishop Ellicott suggests, of their brethren in times of persecution. **Headstrong** (προπετεῖς); as in Acts xix. 36. Neither "heady" nor "headstrong" gives the exact meaning of προπετής, which is "rash," "hasty," "headlong." "Headstrong" rather denotes obstinacy which will not be influenced by wise advice, but προπετής is the person who acts from impulse, without considering consequences, or weighing principles. **Puffed up** (τετυφωμένοι); see 1 Tim. iii. 6, note. **Lovers of pleasure** (φιλήδονοι); only here in the New Testament, and not found in the LXX., but occasionally in classical Greek. "Fond of pleasure" (Liddell and Scott). It is used here as an antithesis to lovers of God (φιλόθεοι), which also occurs only here either in the New Testament or the LXX., but is used by Aristotle. Philo, quoted by Bishop Ellicott (from Wetstein), has exactly the same contrast: φιλήδονον . . . μᾶλλον ἢ . . . φιλόθεον. It looks as if the men spoken of claimed to be φιλόθεοι. A somewhat similar paronomasia occurs in Isa. v. 7, where πῆρρ is opposed to πῆρρ, and ἡρῃζ to ἡρῃζ.

Ver. 5.—Holding for having, A.V.; having denied for denying, A.V.; these also for such, A.V. Holding (ἔχοντες). There is no reason to change "having." Perhaps "indeed" after "having" would give the emphasis conveyed by ἔχοντες preceding the object. A form (μόρφωσις). It should be *the form*; i.e. "the outward semblance," i.g. *μόρφωμα*, form, shape, figure (Liddell and

Scott), here in contrast with *δόναις*, the reality. In Rom. ii. 20, the only other place in the New Testament where *μόρφωσις* occurs, there is no contrast, and so it has the sense of a "true sketch" or "delineation." **Having denied** (*ἡρνημένοι*); possibly more correct than the A.V. "denying," though the difference, if any, is very slight. The meaning is that by their life and character and conversation they gave the lie to their Christian profession. Christianity with them was an outward form, not an inward living power of godliness. **From these** also does not give the sense at all clearly. The A.V. does, though it omits the *καί*, which is not wanted in English. In the Greek it marks an additional circumstance in the case of those of whom he is speaking, viz. that they are to be turned away from as hopeless. **Turn away** (*ἀποτρέπου*); only here in the New Testament, or, at least in the middle voice, in the LXX.; but frequent in classical Greek in different senses. St. Paul uses *ἐκτρέπόμενος* in the same sense in 1 Tim. vi. 20. "This command shows that the apostle treats the symptoms of the last times as in some respects present" (Alford). With this catena of epithets comp. Rom. i. 29—31; and, though of an opposite character, the string of adjectives in Wisd. vii. 22, 23.

Ver. 6.—*These for this sort, A.V.; that for which, A.V.; take for lead, A.V.; by for with, A.V.* **Creep into** (*ἐνδύοντες*); here only in the New Testament. It has the sense of "sneaking into," "insinuating themselves into," as in Xenophon, 'Cyrop.,' 2. 1. 13. **Take captive** (*αἰχμαλωτεύοντες*); as in Eph. iv. 3. The other form, *αἰχμαλωτίζοντες*, which is that of the R.T., is in Luke xxi. 24; Rom. vii. 23; 2 Cor. x. 5. The word well describes the blind surrender of the will and conscience to such crafty teachers. **Silly women** (*τὰ γυναῖκαρια*, diminutive of *γυνή*); nowhere else in the New Testament or LXX., but is used by some late Greek authors. It is a term of contempt—he will not call them *γυναῖκας*—they are only *γυναῖκαρια*. In the passages quoted by Alford from Irenæus and Epiphanius, the women made use of by the later Gnostics are called *γυναῖκαρια*. See, too, the striking quotation in the same note from Jerome, specifying by name the women whom Nicolas of Antioch, Marcion, Montanus, and others employed as their instruments in spreading their abominable heresies. So true is St. Paul's forecast in the text. **Laden with sins** (*σεσσωρευμένα ἁμαρτίας*); elsewhere only in Rom. xii. 20, "heap coals of fire." It occurs in Aristotle and other Greek writers in the sense of heaping one thing upon another, and heaping up anything with something else. The last is the sense

in which it is here used. It seems to convey the idea of passive helplessness. **Led away** (*ἀγόμενα*); with a strong intimation of unresisting weakness (comp. 1 Cor. xii. 2; Acts viii. 32; Luke xxiii. 32). **Lusts** (*ἐπιθυμίας*); all kinds of carnal and selfish desires (see Matt. iv. 19; John viii. 44; Rom. i. 24; vi. 12; vii. 7, 8; Gal. v. 24; Eph. ii. 3; iv. 22; Col. iii. 5; 1 Tim. vi. 9; ch. ii. 22; iv. 3; Titus ii. 12; iii. 3; 1 Pet. i. 14, etc.; 2 Pet. ii. 18; 1 John ii. 16, etc.).

Ver. 7.—**Ever learning, etc.** This is the crowning feature of this powerful sketch of those "silly women," whose thoughts are busied about religion without their affections being reached or their principles being influenced by it. They are always beating about the bush, but they never get possession of the blessed and saving truth of the gospel of God. Their own selfish inclinations, and not the grace of God, continue to be the motive power with them.

Ver. 8.—*And like for now, A.V.; withstand for resist, A.V.; corrupted in mind for of corrupt minds, A.V.* **And**; but would be better. **Jannes and Jambres**; the traditional names of the magicians who opposed Moses; and, if Origen can be trusted, there was an apocryphal book called by their names. But Theodoret ascribes their names to an unwritten Jewish tradition. Their names are found in the Targum of Jonathan on Exod. vii. 11; xxii. 22; and are also mentioned, in conjunction with Moses, with some variation in the name of Jaubres, by Pliny ('Hist. Nat.,' xxxi. 2), who probably got his information from a work of Sergius Paulus on magic, of which the materials were furnished by Elymas the sorcerer (Acts xiii. 6—8). **Withstood** (*ἀντέστησαν*); the same word as is used of Elymas in Acts xiii. 8 (so ch. iv. 15 and elsewhere). **Corrupted in mind** (*κατεφθαρμένα τὸν νοῦν*); elsewhere only in 2 Pet. ii. 12, in the sense of "perishing," being "utterly destroyed," which is the proper meaning of *καταφθέρομαι*. Here in a moral sense *κατεφθαρμένοι τὸν νοῦν* means men whose understanding is gone, and perished, as *διεφθαρμένος τὴν ἀκοήν* means one whose hearing has perished—who is deaf. In 1 Tim. vi. 5 St. Paul uses the more common *διεφθαρμέναν*. **Reprobate** (*ἀδόκιμος*); as Titus i. 16, and elsewhere frequently in St. Paul's Epistles. It is just the contrary to *δόκιμος* (ch. ii. 15, note).

Ver. 9.—*Evident for manifest, A.V.; came to be for was, A.V.* **Shall proceed** (*προκόψουσιν*); ch. ii. 16 (where see note) and ver. 13. The apostle's meaning here is, as explained by the example of the magicians, that heresies shall not prevail against the truth. *Ἐπὶ πλέον* means beyond the point indicated in his description of their future

progressive evil. They would "proceed further in ungolliness," as he said in ch. ii. 16, but not up to the point of destroying the gospel, as history has shown. The various forms of Gnosticism have perished. The gospel remains. As theirs also came to be (Exod. viii. 18, 19). Surely the A.V. "was" is better.

Ver. 10.—*Didst follow my teaching for hast fully known my doctrine*, A.V. and T.R.; *conduct for manner of life*, A.V.; *love for charity*, A.V. *Didst follow* (παρηκολούθησας, which is the R.T. for παρακολούθηκας, in the perfect, which is the T.R.). The evidence for the two readings is nicely balanced. But St. Paul uses the perfect in 1 Tim. iv. 6 (where see note), and it seems highly improbable that he here used the aorist in order to convey a rebuff to Timothy by insinuating that he had once followed, but that he was doing so no longer. The sentence, "thou didst follow," etc., is singularly insipid. The A.V. "thou hast fully known" gives the sense fully and clearly. Timothy had fully known St. Paul's whole career, partly from what he had heard, and partly from what he had been an eye-witness of. *My teaching*. How different from that of those impostors! *Conduct* (ἀγωγή); here only in the New Testament, but found in the LXX. in Esth. ii. 20 (τὴν ἀγωγὴν αὐτῆς, "her manner of life"—her behaviour towards Mordecai, where there is nothing to answer to it in the Hebrew text); 2 Macc. iv. 16 (τὰς ἀγωγὰς); vi. 8; xi. 24. Aristotle uses ἀγωγή for "conduct," or "mode of life" ('Ethics'), and Polybius (iv. 74, 14), quoted by Alfred, has ἀγωγή and ἀγωγὰ τοῦ βίου, "way" or "manner of life." The A.V. "manner of life" is a very good rendering. *Purpose* (πρόθεσις); that which a person sets before him as the end to be attained (Acts xi. 25; xxvii. 13; 2 Macc. iii. 8; and in Aristotle, Polybius, and others). Used often of God's eternal purpose, as e.g. ch. i. 9; Eph. i. 11, etc. In enumerating these and the following, "faith, long-suffering, charity, and patience," St. Paul doubtless had in view, not self-glorification, which was wholly alien to his earnest, self-denying character, but the mention of those qualities which he saw were most needed by Timothy. *Long-suffering* (τῇ μακροθυμίᾳ); as 1 Tim. i. 16, of the long-suffering of Jesus Christ towards himself, and elsewhere frequently of human patience and forbearance towards others. *Patience* (τῇ ἐπομονῇ). This is exercised in the patient endurance of afflictions for Christ's sake. It is coupled, as here, with μακροθυμία, long-suffering, in Col. i. 11.

Ver. 11.—*Suffering for afflictions*, A.V.; *what things befell me for which came unto me*, A.V.; and for *but*, A.V. Persecutions

(διωγμοῖς); as Matt. xiii. 21; Acts viii. 1; xiii. 50; 2 Cor. xii. 10, etc. *Sufferings* (τοῖς παθήμασιν); usually so rendered in the A.V. (Rom. viii. 18; 2 Cor. i. 5; Col. i. 24, etc.); rendered "afflictions" in Heb. x. 32; 1 Pet. v. 9. At Antioch; in Pisidia (Acts xiii. 14). For an account of the persecutions encountered by St. Paul at Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra, see Acts xiii., xiv. It was at St. Paul's second, or rather third, visit to Lystra that he chose Timothy for his companion (Acts xvi. 1—3). I endured (ὑπένεγκα); not simply "suffered," but "underwent," willingly and firmly suffered (see 1 Pet. ii. 19). As regards the construction, the antecedent to οἷα is παθήμασιν, and the difference between εἰ and οἷα is that εἰ would limit the reference to the actual παθήματα at Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra, but οἷα extends the reference to all similar sufferings. The proper English rendering is "such as befell me." But the clause at the end of the sentence should be rendered "what great persecutions I endured." As Bengel notes, "οἷος demonstrat rei gravitatem," and οἷους preceding the substantive with which it agrees (διώγμους), cannot be construed the same as οἷα the relative. The sentence, οἷους διώγμους ὑπένεγκα, is an amplification of the preceding διώγμοις: "Thou hast fully known my persecutions . . . viz. what great persecutions I endured." And out of them all, etc. This is added for Timothy's encouragement, that he might stand fast in the face of persecutions and sufferings. *Delivered me* (με ἐξέσωσας). Had the apostle in his mind the clause in the Lord's Prayer, "Deliver us from evil" (Matt. vi. 13)? Comp. ch. iv. 18, where the resemblance is still more striking. Observe the testimony to Christ's omnipotence in this ascription to him, in both passages, of St. Paul's deliverance (comp. Acts xviii. 10).

Ver. 12.—*Would for will*, A.V. *Yea and all* (καὶ πάντες δέ). As though he had said, "Mine is not a solitary example of a servant of God being persecuted; it is the common lot of all who will live godly in Christ Jesus" (comp. John xv. 20 and 1 Pet. iv. 1, 12, 13).

Ver. 13.—*Impostors for seducers*, A.V. *Evil men* (πονηροί). In ch. iv. 18 it is πονηρὸς ἔργου πονηροῦ. The adjective is applied indifferently to persons and things—evil men, evil servants, evil persons, evil generation, evil spirits, etc., and evil deeds, evil fruits, evil eye, evil works, etc. Satan, the embodiment of evil; is ὁ πονηρός. *Impostors* (γόητες); only here in the New Testament. In classical Greek γόης is a juggler, a cheat, an enchanter. St. Paul still had the Egyptian magicians in his mind. *Shall wax worse and worse* (ποροῦσιν ἐπὶ τὸ χεῖρον); see above, ver. 9, note.

Ver. 14.—*Abide for continue*, A.V. *Abide*

thou, etc. Be not like these juggling heretics, blown about by every wind of doctrine, and always seeking some new thing, but abide in the old truths which thou hast learnt from thy childhood. **Hast been assured** of (*ἐπιστάσης*); only here in the New Testament, but found in 2 Macc. vii. 24 and 1 Kings i. 36. In classical Greek it has the same sense as here (among others), "to be made sure of a thing." **Of whom thou hast learned this** (*παρὰ τίνος ἔμαθες*, or, according to another reading of nearly equal authority, *παρὰ τίνων*). If *τίνας* is the right reading, it must refer either to God or to St. Paul. In favour of its referring to God is the expression in the Prophet Isaiah commented upon by our Lord in John vi. 45, where *παρὰ τοῦ Πατρὸς* answers to *παρὰ τίνος*; the promise concerning the Comforter, "He shall teach you all things" (John xiv. 26, etc.); and the very similar reasoning of St. John, when he is exhorting his "little children" to stand fast in the faith, in spite of those that seduced them: "Let that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning;" for "the anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, . . . and even as it hath taught you, abide in him" (1 John ii. 24—28); and other similar passages. There would obviously be great force in reminding Timothy that he had received the gospel under the immediate teaching of the Holy Spirit, and that it would be a shameful thing for him to turn aside under the influence of those impostors. If *τίνας* does not refer to God, it must refer to St. Paul. If, on the other hand, *τίνων* is the true reading (which is less probable), it must refer to Lois and Eunice, which seems rather feeble.

Ver. 15.—*Babe for child*, A.V.; *sacred writings for Holy Scriptures*, A.V. And that from a babe, etc. Another consideration urged as a reason for standing fast. He was no novice in the Scriptures. His mother and grandmother had been careful to imbue him with that sacred literature which should make him wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, from his very earliest years. Surely he would not throw away such a precious advantage. The sacred writings (*τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα*); literally, *the holy letters*, or *learning*. An ordinarily educated child learns *γράμματα* (John vii. 15), in contradistinction to the uneducated, who are *ἀγράμματοι* (Acts iv. 13). But Timothy had learnt *τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα*, whose excellence is described in the next verse.

Ver. 16.—*Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for all* Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable, A.V.; *teaching for doctrine*, A.V.; *which is in for*

in, A.V. **Every Scripture**, etc. There are two ways of construing this important passage: (A) As in the A.V., in which *θεόπνευστος* is part of the predicate coupled by *καὶ* with the following *ἀφ' ἑλίου*; (B) as in the R.V., where *θεόπνευστος* is part of the subject (as *πάν ἔργον ἀγαθόν*, "every good work," 2 Cor. ix. 8, and elsewhere); and the following *καὶ* is ascensive, and to be rendered "is also." Commentators are pretty equally divided, though the older ones (as Origen, Jerome (Vulgate), the versions) mostly adopt (B). In favour of (A), however, it may be said (1) that such a sentence as that which arises from (B) necessarily implies that there are some *γραφαὶ* which are not *θεόπνευστοι*, just as *πάν ἔργον ἀγαθόν* implies that there are some works which are not good; *πάντα εὐλογία πνευματικῇ* (Eph. i. 3), that there are some blessings which are not spiritual; *πάν ἔργον πονηρὸν* (2 Tim. iv. 18), that there are some works which are not evil; and so on. But as *γραφῇ* is invariably used in the New Testament for "Scripture," and not for any profane writing; it is not in accordance with biblical language to say, "every inspired Scripture," because every *Scripture* is inspired. (2) The sentence, taken according to (B), is an extremely awkward, and, as Alford admits, harsh construction, not supported in its entirety by one single parallel usage in the whole New Testament. (3) The sentence, taken according to (A), is a perfectly simple one, and is exactly parallel with 1 Tim. iv. 4, *Πάν κτίσμα Θεοῦ καλόν, καὶ οὐδὲν ἀπόβλητον*, "Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused." (4) It is in perfect harmony with the context. Having in the preceding verse stated the excellence of the sacred writings, he accounts for that excellence by referring to their origin and source. They are inspired of God, and hence their wide use and great power. (5) This interpretation is supported by high authority: Chrysostom, Gregory of Nyssa, etc., among the ancients (Alford); and Bengel, Wiesinger, De Wette, etc., among modern. The advocates of (B), as Bishop Ellicott, Dean Alford, etc., speak very doubtfully. With regard to the rendering of *πάντα γραφῇ*, no doubt, strict grammar, in the absence of the article, favours the rendering in the R.V., "every Scripture," rather than that of the A.V., "all Scripture." But Alford's remark on Matt. i. 20 applies with full force here: "When a word or an expression came to bear a technical conventional meaning, it was also common to use it without the article, as if it were a proper name, e.g. *Θεός, νόμος, υἱός Θεοῦ*," etc. Therefore, just as *πάντα Ἱερουσόλυμα* (Matt. ii. 3) means "all Jerusalem," not "every Jerusalem," so here *πάντα γραφῇ* means "all

Scripture.”¹ What follows of the various uses of Holy Scripture is not true of “every Scripture.” One Scripture is profitable for doctrine, another for reproof, and so on. Examples of *γραφή* without the article are 2 Pet. i. 20 and Rom. i. 2; and of *πᾶς* not followed by the article, and yet meaning “all,” are in Eph. ii. 21 and iii. 15. Inspired of God, etc. (*θεοπνευστος*); here only in the New Testament or LXX., but occasionally in classical Greek, as Plutarch. For teaching, etc. The particular uses for which Scripture is said to be profitable present no difficulty. Teaching, of which Holy Scripture is the only infallible source. Reproof (*ἐλεγχον* or *ἐλεγμὸν*); only here and Heb. xi. 1; but in classical Greek it means “a proof,” specially for the purpose of “refutation” of a false statement or argument. Here in the same sense for the “conviction” or “refutation” of false teachers (comp. Titus i. 9, 13), but probably including errors in living (compare in the ‘Ordering of Priests,’ “That there be no place left among you, either for error in religion or for viciousness in life”). Correction (*ἐπανόρθωσιν*); only here in the New Testament, but occasionally in the LXX., and frequently in classical Greek, as Aristotle, Plato, etc., in the sense of “correction,” *i.e.* setting a person or thing straight, “revisal,” “improvement,” “amendment,” or the like. It may be applied equally to opinions and to morals, or way of life. Instruction which is in righteousness. There is no advantage in this awkward phraseology. “Instruction in righteousness” exactly expresses the

meaning. The Greek, *τὴν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ*, merely limits the *παιδεία* to the sphere of righteousness or Christian virtue. By the use of Holy Scripture the Christian is being continually more perfectly instructed in holy living.

Ver. 17.—*Complete for perfect*, A.V.; *furnished completely for thoroughly furnished*, A.V.; *every good work for all good works*, A.V. *Complete* (*ἔκπλιος*); only here in the New Testament, but common in classical Greek. “Complete, perfect of its kind” (Liddell and Scott). *Furnished completely* (*ἐξηπλισμένος*, containing the same root as *ἔκπλιος*); elsewhere in the New Testament only in Acts xxi. 5 in the sense of “completing” a term of days. It is nearly synonymous with *καταρτίσω* (Matt. xxi. 16; Luke vi. 40; 2 Cor. xiii. 11; Heb. xiii. 21; 1 Pet. v. 10). In late classical Greek *ἐξαρτίσω* means, as here, “to equip fully.” As regards the question whether the man of God is restricted in its meaning to the minister of Christ, or comprehends all Christians, two things seem to decide in favour of the former: the one that “the man of God” is in the Old Testament invariably applied to prophets in the immediate service of God (see 1 Tim. vi. 11, note); the other that in 1 Tim. vi. 11 it undoubtedly refers to Timothy in his character of chief pastor of the Church, and that here too the whole force of the description of the uses and excellence of Holy Scripture is brought to bear upon the exhortations in ver. 14, “Continue *thou* in the things which thou hast heard,” addressed to Timothy as the Bishop of the Ephesian Church (see, too, ch. iv. 1—5, where it is abundantly clear that all that precedes was intended to bear directly upon Timothy’s faithful and vigorous discharge of his office as an evangelist).

¹ Compare, too, *πᾶσα σὰρξ*, “all flesh” (Luke iii. 6); *πᾶς οἶκος Ἰσραὴλ*, “all the house of Israel” (Acts ii. 36); *ἐν πάσῃ ἐπιστολῇ*, “in his whole Epistle” (Ignat., ‘Ad Ephes.’ xii.).

HOMILETICS.

Vers. 1—17.—*Holy Scripture the strength of the man of God.* There is marvellous force in the application to the Christian bishop and evangelist of the title THE MAN OF GOD. When we remember the course of faithful and untiring labour, and patient unflinching suffering, which was run by those to whom alone this title was given in the Old Testament—Moses and Sammel and Elijah, and other prophets of God—we feel at once that the application of this title to the ministers of Christ under the New Testament teaches them with incisive power that the like spirit must be found in them if they are worthy to be classed with the men of God. Evidently the “man of God” must not be afraid of a man that shall die, or a son of man which shall be made as grass; he must not shrink from bearing witness for God before an unbelieving and gainsaying world; he must not be a lover of ease or pleasure, or of the praise of men; he must not be greedy of gain or covetous of reward; he must not be a man of strife and brawls, but a man of love and peace; he must be zealous for God’s honour and glory; he must be a staunch upholder of God’s truth against errors and false doctrines; and he must be a man of prayer, and very devout towards God; for otherwise how shall he be called a “man of God”? But how shall this unearthly character be main-

tained? When those perilous times are at their height in which all the natural affections of men seem to be blighted, and all the natural safeguards against the growth of evil seem to be overborne by the floods of ungodliness, when a proud boasting spirit, as empty as it is pretentious, carries men into all kinds of unseemly action, and when religion itself, far from guiding men in holy paths, degenerates into hypocrisy and faction and opposition to that which is good, how shall the man of God maintain his integrity, abide in the true doctrine of God, and hold his own against the teachers of lies, and the seducers of weak and silly souls? God has provided him with an all-sufficient weapon of attack and of defence. In those holy Scriptures which were given by inspiration of God, the man of God finds a spiritual furniture suitable for every need. By the study of it he acquires fresh wisdom for his task, and by its spirit his own spirit is nourished and refreshed. In the light of its bright truth the pernicious errors of seducers are exposed; by its counsels waverers are established, the weak are strengthened, the crooked are set straight again. Conversant with its heavenly doctrine, the man of God is never at a loss for a word of rebuke, of comfort, or exhortation. And while, on the one hand, he is able to refute every new heresy that arises, by reference to the unchanging Word of God, on the other he daily acquires some new insight into the depths of revelation for his own edification and that of others. He finds that the manifold and many-sided wisdom of the Scriptures is as able to cope with the intellectual difficulties of the nineteenth century as it was with the Gnosticism of the East in the first centuries of Christianity. And so, while some turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables, the man of God finds his faith daily strengthening and increased, and looks forward fearlessly to the time when the folly of the sceptic shall be evident to all men, and the truth of God's Word shall be vindicated before the whole creation at the appearing of Jesus Christ in the glory of his kingdom.

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Ver. 1.—*The perilous times of the apostasy.* The apostle next proceeds to predict a further progress in error, with the view of putting Timothy on his guard and sharpening his diligence.

I. THE PERIOD OF THIS APOSTASY. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come." 1. *The language does not point to the closing days of the Christian dispensation*, for it resembles the language of the Apostle John—"It is the last time"—where the present is undoubtedly referred to, and not the future. 2. *The contextual injunction, "from such turn away," applies to the present rather than to a far-distant future.* The Christian Church has in all ages shown a condition of things only too closely represented by the moral picture in the context. The apostle implies that there were "vessels of dishonour" in the "large house" in his own day, such as Hymenæus and Philetus, as well as "vessels unto honour." 3. *The language has a wide latitude, covering the whole space of the Christian dispensation.* The evil had begun to work in the age of Timothy, but the worst development of anti-Christian apostasy will be in the closing days of the dispensation. The "days of the Messiah" are often alluded to in the Hebrew prophets as "in the last days," literally, "the end of days" (Isa. ii. 2; Hos. iii. 5; Micah iv. 1).

II. THE DANGEROUS CHARACTER OF THIS APOSTASY. "Perilous times shall come." 1. *It will be a time of danger to the faith of God's people.* 2. *It will be a time of peril to their lives.* 3. *It will be a time of abounding wickedness as well as error.*—T. C.

Vers. 2—5.—*Characteristics of the apostasy.* The doctrinal degeneracy is marked by a widespread moral decay. The apostle, after his usual manner, groups the characters into classes for more distinct consideration.

I. THE SELFISH CLASS. "For men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money." Selfishness heads the dreary list. It is regarded by many theologians as the root-principle of all sin. As the opposite of love, however, is not selfishness, but hatred, this position cannot be maintained. Yet selfishness is, above all things, the hard represser of love. The "love of money" has been called "the daughter of selfishness."

II. THE CLASS OF ARROGANT BOASTERS. "Boasters, arrogant, railers." The first are

ostentatious in speech; the second, full of pride and contempt for others; the third are full of insults to men.

III. THE CLASS WHICH IS DEFIANTLY REGARDLESS OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS. "Disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable." He who is regardless of filial duty will be ungrateful to others, and he that is ungrateful will have no regard for holiness of character; for he will keep covenant with no one who disregards his parent or his benefactor.

IV. THE CLASS DISTINGUISHED BY RECKLESS AND PASSIONATE DEFIANCE OF GOOD. "Slanderers, without self-control, fierce, no lovers of good, traitors." The first term points to the disposition to bring the good down to the level of the base; the second, to the absence of all restraint from law, human or Divine; the third, to the savage temper that delights in cruelty; the fourth, to the spirit that "loves darkness rather than light;" the fifth, to the class of men who could betray their Christian brethren to their persecutors, or behave falsely in any of their existing relationships.

V. THE CLASS OF HEADY AND CONCEITED ACTORS. "Headstrong, puffed up." Rashness and conceit are often allied.

VI. THE CLASS OF PLEASURE-SEEKERS. "Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God." It represents a dissipated class under a Christian profession, who have no serious pursuits, and prefer the friendship of the world to the friendship of God.

Thus, the long catalogue of moral enormity developed by the apostasy began with "the love of self," and ends with "the love of pleasure," to the utter exclusion, first and last, of the "love of God."—T. C.

Ver. 5.—*The relation of the apostasy to the Christian profession.* I. THE EXTERNAL FORM OF PIETY IS TO EXIST UNDER THE APOSTASY. "Having a form of godliness." The picture is that of a Christianized paganism in the Church. There was to be a scrupulous regard for all ritualistic regularity; an outward show of devoutness under strict forms, and the mask of godliness over all to cover a heart in secret enslaved by sin.

II. THERE WILL BE A REPUDIATION OF REAL GODLINESS. "But denying the power thereof." 1. *The power of godliness consists in love to God and love to our neighbour.* These were both repudiated. The class referred to were strangers to experimental religion, which they dishonoured by saying one thing with their lips and another thing with their lives. 2. *Such a repudiation involves graver sin and deeper condemnation than if they had never known the truth or heard of the way of life.*

III. THE DUTY OF BELIEVERS IN THE APOSTASY. "From such turn away." We ought to withdraw from their fellowship, avoid all familiarity with them, hold no terms with the enemies of Christ and his kingdom.—T. C.

Vers. 6, 7.—*The insidiously proselytizing habits of these apostates.* I. THE ARTS OF THE SEDUCERS. "For of this sort are they who creep into houses, and lead captive silly women." 1. *They were of a most proselytizing spirit.* Like the Pharisees, they would compass sea and land to make one proselyte. 2. *They practised unworthy arts.* They wormed their way insidiously into the confidence of families. There was a deceitful and tricky method of gaining access to their victims. 3. *They used their stratagems to snare women rather than men.* They knew that women, as the weaker vessels, were more accessible to soft blandishments and specious pretences of piety. They counted upon an accession of female converts as, above all things, most contributing to the success of their propaganda.

II. THE CHARACTER OF THEIR VICTIMS. "Silly women laden with sins, led away by divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." These victims of their specious arts were morally and intellectually prepared for them. 1. *They were, morally, under the sway of evil passions and desires,* full, no doubt, of "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." Such women would welcome a short cut to peace, or any reconciliation between religion and worldliness that could be devised by the arts of apostasy. The words seem to point to the weight of former sins burdening the conscience, from which they hoped to be released under easier conditions than those prescribed by the gospel. 2. *They were incapable, through their sinful life, of attaining a true knowledge of the truth.* They were "silly women,"

with light, frivolous, unbalanced judgments; "ever learning"—with a morbid love of novelties in religion, an insatiable curiosity for the mysteries promised by their false guides, and a constant craving for an adaptation of doctrinal views to their evil desires;—"and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." Because their hearts had become indurated through an evil life, and so made inaccessible to the truth.—T. C.

Vers. 8, 9.—*The character and aims of the false teachers.* The apostle vividly depicts their attitude toward the truth.

I. THEY HAVE THEIR HISTORICAL PROTOTYPES. "As Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also withstand the truth." 1. *These were two Egyptian magicians, called "wise men and sorcerers"* (Exod. vii. 11—22), who appeared at the court of Pharaoh to resist the wonder-working power of Moses. Their names do not occur in the Old Testament, but they are found in the Targum of Jonathan, and are also quoted by heathen writers. What was more natural than that the apostle should quote to Timothy one of the two traditions of his country? 2. *These magicians, reported to have been sons of Balaam, were thwarted in their arts by the superior power that worked through Moses.* The parallel was therefore in a double sense apt.

II. THE FALSE TEACHERS DIRECTLY WITHSTOOD THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL. 1. *They may have used occult arts like their Egyptian prototypes to attract disciples; for the word "seducers," applied to them in the context (ver. 13), has this signification.* The claim to possess such powers was not unusual in that day (Acts viii. 9—24; xiii. 6—12; xix. 18—20). 2. *But, like Elymas, they withstood the truth of the gospel, by representing themselves as possessing as much authority as the apostle himself, and thus neutralizing its exclusive claims.* They subverted the hopes of the gospel.

III. THE EXPLANATION OF THEIR ANTI-CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE. "Men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith." 1. *Corrupt affections depraved their mental judgments.* Even that mind, which is the medium through which the Holy Spirit makes his communications to man, had become darkened. "A corrupt head, a corrupt heart, and a vicious life, usually accompany each other." 2. *The doctrines of these teachers had been tested and discovered to be worthless, like silver which was to be rejected by man.* They had nothing but the name in common with the Christian faith.

IV. THE CHECK THAT WOULD BE GIVEN TO THEIR PROGRESS. "But they shall proceed no further; for their folly shall be evident to all men, as theirs also came to be." This passage seems opposed to ch. ii. 16, where it is said that "they shall advance to more ungodliness;" but in that place (1) the apostle is speaking of an immediate diffusion of error, in this of its ultimate extinction; (2) in that place the advance toward ungodliness is asserted, here there is a denial of its successful advance without exposure. The evil would advance, but only to a certain point, and the true character of its promoters—"their folly"—would be made as manifest as was that of the Egyptian magicians.—T. C.

Vers. 10—12.—*The career of the apostle commended as an example to his youthful disciple.* The apostle recalls to Timothy's mind the facts of his own checkered career, partly to mark the contrast between his life and that of the false teachers, partly to stimulate Timothy to like faithfulness and endurance.

I. IT IS GOOD FOR YOUNG MINISTERS TO OBSERVE AND FOLLOW THE WAYS OF THEIR ELDER BRETHREN. "But thou didst follow my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith." 1. *They will thus be stimulated to greater effort.* 2. *They will be guided by wiser counsels.* 3. *They will be guarded against many mistakes.* 4. *They will be better able to endure persecutions and trials.*

II. IT IS ALLOWABLE FOR A CHRISTIAN MINISTER TO SPEAK OF WHAT GOD'S GRACE HAS ENABLED HIM TO DO AND TO SUFFER FOR THE GOSPEL. 1. *It glorifies God's grace.* The apostle always made this grace the supreme factor in his success. "By the grace of God I am what I am;" "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was in me" (1 Cor. xv. 10). 2. *It is an encouragement to other ministers to labour with equal self-denial.*

III. THE METHOD OF THE APOSTLE'S MINISTRY AND LIFE. "My teaching," in allusion less to his doctrine than to his manner of giving instruction; "conduct," or manner of life, in allusion to "my ways which be in Christ" (1 Cor. iv. 17); "purpose," for he remained true to the spiritual objects of his life, and, above all, to his mission to the

Gentiles; "faith," in allusion to his belief in the fundamental doctrines of the gospel, linked with "long-suffering" toward his bitter adversaries, whom he longed to lead into truth—"the faith and the patience" being necessary to the inheritance of the promises (Heb. vi. 12); "love," which seemed never to fail, "believing all things, bearing all things, hoping all things;" linked with "endurance," as before (1 Tim. vi. 11; Titus ii. 2), because it is the sustaining element of this endurance; "persecutions, afflictions, which came to me at Antioch," in Pisidia, whence he was expelled by the Jews; "at Iconium," where both Jews and Gentiles made an assault upon him; "at Lystra," where he was stoned and left for dead—the three cities being named because of Timothy's intimate acquaintance with them, the apostle's sufferings there being the earliest in his missionary life. He gratefully records his deliverance out of all his persecutions by the good hand of the Lord.

IV. THE ATTITUDE OF THE WORLD TOWARD GODLINESS. "Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." 1. *The persons thus described.* (1) Those who aim at a godly life—who "wish to live godly." This is the highest aim of man in a world with many lofty ideals. (2) They are not merely godly, but live in all the outward amenities of gospel-godliness. "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." (3) This life of godliness finds its source and spring in Jesus Christ. It is "in Christ Jesus." 2. *Their lot in this life.* "Shall suffer persecution." (1) This was Christ's prediction. "If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you" (John xv. 20). (2) The world is essentially at war with the kingdom of God. "Because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John xv. 19). (3) Better to suffer as Christians than as evil-doers.—T. C.

Vers. 13.—*The downward course of seducers.* The apostle connects the persecution with the ways of evil men, while he warns Timothy against them.

I. THEIR DEGENERATE COURSE. "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse." 1. *The persons here described.* (1) Evil men. (a) They are those in contrast with the men who "would live godly in Christ Jesus." (b) They are not simply sinners as all men are by nature and practice, but rather wicked men who wear a mask of godliness, yet are full of malice against the saints of God. (2) Seducers, literally magicians, in allusion to those of Egypt; men who are full of sorceries to captivate and betray the unwary into error. 2. *They shall go from bad to worse*—both in principle and in practice, in the use of their seductive arts and in the gradual depravation of their character. There is nothing to arrest their downward course; there is no grace in the heart; the principles of evil will work with unchecked energy in their natures.

II. THE EXPLANATION OF THIS DEGENERACY. "Deceiving and being deceived." 1. *The method of mental and moral debasement.* Let men repeat falsities with sufficient frequency and deliberateness, and they will come by-and-by to believe them themselves. They begin by deceiving others. They cannot deceive God nor the elect, but by their good words and fair speeches, their lying wonders and their specious arts, they may seduce the simple into error. 2. *The retribution that follows upon deception is self-deception.* Such deceivers have become sincere in their error, because they have blinded their spiritual eyesight; but now they see truth as error, and error as truth.—T. C.

Vers. 14, 15.—*An admonition to Timothy to abide in the ways of truth.* Amidst all the seductions of the false teachers, the apostle urges Timothy to hold fast the doctrines which he had received in his early training.

I. THE DUTY AND NECESSITY OF HOLDING FAST BY THE DIVINE VERITIES. "But do thou continue in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of." 1. *The strength and comfort of an undoubting persuasion.* Timothy was not to be moved away from the doctrines of the gospel either by persecutions or seductive arts. He found his strength and peace in them. 2. *He had really learned them, unlike those ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth;* for he had an experimental knowledge of them. He was, besides, fully assured of them, with "the full assurance of understanding." It is a very unbecoming attitude for a teacher of others to be sceptical in his opinions. He ought to affirm with certainty, and, if he is fully assured, he has no right to surrender the truth.

II. THE GROUNDS OF HIS CERTAINTY AND ASSURANCE. "Knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a babe thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." 1. *He had been taught sound doctrine by Lois and Eunice.* It is, therefore, proper for parents to instruct children in doctrine from their earliest days. 2. *He had been trained from his very infancy in the Holy Scriptures.* It was, therefore, a right thing for him to be instructed in the Old Testament, since it was all the Scripture he could have had in his childhood. 3. *The Scripture he studied was sufficient to lead him to Christ.* "Through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (1) This marks the means by which the salvation can be attained; for Christ is "the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. x. 4). (2) The effect of the salvation is not merely to instruct, but to make wise in the highest sense—giving spiritual wisdom and understanding in the knowledge of God's will; for men are naturally without spiritual discernment. (3) The salvation cannot be enjoyed without faith, resting upon the person of the Redeemer.—T. C.

Vers. 16, 17.—*The authority and utility of the Scriptures.* The apostle is led to emphasize the value of the Scriptures generally for the purposes of spiritual life.

I. THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE. "Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable." 1. *This does not signify that there may be Scripture not divinely inspired,* but merely asserts that the Scripture being thus inspired is profitable. 2. *The words "inspired by God" point to the entire agency of God in producing that Divine element which makes the Bible differ from every other book.* The inspired person was the organ of God in what he said, so that his words were the words of God. 3. *Scripture says nothing concerning the mode of inspiration.* The process is supernatural, and it cannot be explained. It is not with the mode but with the result we are concerned. 4. *Inspiration differs from revelation*—this being that through which apostles and prophets came into possession of Divine information, inspiration being that through which they were able infallibly to communicate it to others. 5. *There is nothing in the doctrine of inspiration inconsistent with the idea that the inspired penmen used their own peculiarities of verbal expression or personal idiosyncrasies.* 6. *The inspiration extends to words as well as thoughts*—to the form as well as the substance of Scripture. So far as the record is inspired at all, infallible thought must be definite thought, and definite thought implies words. The apostle claimed that the Holy Spirit guaranteed his words as well as his thoughts (1 Cor. ii. 13, "Not in the didactic words of man's wisdom, but in the didactic words of the Holy Ghost"). Besides, Christ and the apostles argue from the very words of Scripture (Matt. xxii. 45; Gal. iii. 16). 7. The term "every Scripture" in the text seems to include *the Old Testament and the New Testament* so far as it had been written; else there would have been no necessity for a different term from that used in the fifteenth verse, "Holy Scriptures."

II. THE UTILITY OF THE SCRIPTURE "Is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for discipline in righteousness." 1. *It is useful for teaching*—as a medium for communicating instruction, that we may know and believe what is necessary to salvation. 2. *It is useful for reproof*—for the refutation of error, for convincing a man of his error. 3. *It is useful for correction*—as to what is practically wrong in life. 4. *It is useful for "discipline in righteousness"*—righteousness being the element in which this discipline is to take effect, through the agency of Scripture.

III. THE RESULT OR DESIGN OF THE SCRIPTURE. "That the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." 1. *The design is the perfection of the believer in life and service.* The description supplies the man of God with all due appliances for this end. They help to make us perfect in knowledge, faith, and holiness, as well as to furnish us with wisdom and guidance in all holy service. 2. *Inference to be drawn from the design of Scripture.* It is a perfect, a plain, a sufficient rule of faith and life, in answer to Roman Catholics. If it can make wise to salvation, perfect the man of God, and furnish him for all holy work, then there is no need for tradition to supplement its imaginary defects.—T. C.

Ver. 4.—*The love of pleasure.* "Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." "Pleasure" is a word used in Scripture to denote, not lawful and wise enjoyment,

but a carnal sensuousness which often leads to sensuality. We see what an absorbing power pleasure is, and how by degrees it destroys the sense of duty and ignores the voice of conscience.

I. HERE IS A GREAT FORCE. "*Lovers!*" Love *will* surely be exercised in some form. Sin is *perversion*. We are so constituted as to love something. There is an enthusiasm of evil. Men delight in sin; and so the forces of the soul run to weeds.

II. HERE IS A WRONG OBJECT. Pleasure—instead of God. What a contrast! We find that there is sometimes an aesthetic sensuousness that finds pleasure in immoral "art"—where God is not, where there is no reverence, no righteousness, no purity, no goodness. And men worship before the shrine of pleasure till they become idolaters, worshipping worldly applause, fleshly satisfaction, and carnal joy. There is a pleasure that is lawful and healthful; without it brain and body, mind and heart, suffer; but it must ever be subordinated to an earnest life and a godly devotion, or we become "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God."—W. M. S.

Ver. 5.—*The hypocrite's garb*. "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." There may be conscious and unconscious hypocrisy. Either way godliness is "feigned." There is no pulsing heart of life in it. Its appearance is only like phosphorus on the face of the dead; its activity is only the galvanized motion of a corpse.

I. WE MAY DISCOVER THE SIGNS OF MERE FORMALISM. What are they? See vers. 2, 3, and 4, in which men who are "covetous, and lovers of their own selves," are associated with blasphemers and false accusers, unthankful and unholy. All alike find their hypocrisy is detected by the Divine insight. We may well search and examine ourselves; for do not men think lightly sometimes of covetousness and selfishness, or of being unthankful or high-minded? Often, indeed, we look to great vices only as our destroyers, and we forget that hypocrisy may be seen in masked ingratitude. Yet here it is discovered, not under the cloak which hides evil enormities, but under the veil which hides from our eyes the presence of the more respectable sins.

II. WE MAY STUDY THE SECRET OF THIS FORMALISM. 1. Prayerless habit which leaves the spirit unsupplied with the nutriment of communion with God. 2. Conscientiousness of the fact that in the world appearances are enough, and that religion is so respected and so respectable that it will not do to live without its *appearance*. 3. Fellowship with the world, which denudes us of all earnest endeavours after the Divine life.—W. M. S.

Ver. 8.—*Corruption within*. "Men of corrupt minds." It is here that evil *begins*, though it does not *end* here. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." But he does not show in himself the development of evil at once. The hour of revelation, however, will surely come; for "they that be otherwise [than good] cannot be hid."

I. THEY RESIST THE TRUTH. For this reason the truth will not let *them* alone. It is an active searching power. It is "a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart," and men resent the intrusion of this all-discovering, all-judging power. Impurity hates purity. Falsehood hates truth. Worldly minds resist the claim of God's Word to supremacy over their hearts and lives. They resist its right to reign, and its claim to dominate thought and action too.

II. THEY BECOME REPROBATE. Reprobation is no hard decree of God's; it is man's own act and deed, and it is the result of the "corrupt mind." This breeding corruption spreads. The seeds of evil are scattered here and there till the soul is like a wilderness, and the mind which was made to be a garden of holiness becomes a graveyard of sin. Moral death ensues, and with death always comes corruption.

III. THEY BECOME REVEALED. "Their folly shall be made manifest" (ver. 9). The secret sin becomes a public shame. The thought incarnates itself in deed, and retribution takes the form of disgrace.—W. M. S.

Vers. 1—17.—*Grievous times*. "But know this, that in the last days grievous times shall come." They were in the first days of the Christian era; the times foretold were to be in the last days of that era. There is an intended indefiniteness about the days; nothing is said about their commencement, or about the period over which they are to

extend. They are to embrace distinct times, but all characterized by grievousness. From what follows we may infer that the grievousness of the times will consist in the prevalence of moral evil, and in the strange coexistence of moral evil with Christian forms. There will be difficulty in knowing how to act, and also in acting according to knowledge in the face of strong, quasi-Christian solidarities of evil. From a source of revelation open to him, the apostle was able to write with certainty regarding the coming of grievous times in the last days. There is not excluded the ultimate triumph of religion in this world which is taught elsewhere.

I. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MEN IN THE GRIEVOUS TIMES. "For men shall be lovers of self." "Such men as the apostle here describes there have been at all times, and the apostle does not say that they will be then such for the first time, nor that all men without exception shall be such, but he describes the moral-spiritual physiognomy of the times which he beholds approaching." We are not to include in this first part of the description all who are influenced by self-love; for it is only right before God that we should be influenced by an intelligent regard to our interest. The persons intended are the *selfish*—a word which was only brought in by the Puritan divines toward the middle of the seventeenth century. They are those who exclude God from the central place to which he is entitled in their life. They are those who exclude others from the place of interest to which they are entitled. They thus put self in a false position—make it the beginning and end of all their thoughts and actions. They properly take the place of pre-eminence in the apostle's list; for all classes of sinners are after the selfish type, *i.e.* put forward self in some way or other that does not accord with eternal truth. In the grievous times will be large developments of selfishness. "Lovers of money." From similarity of composition in the Greek words, the apostle passes on from lovers of self to lovers of money. Under this head are not to be included all seekers of money; for it is right to seek money for good ends. Neither are there to be included all who seek money for selfish ends. But we are to think rather of the *avaricious*, *i.e.* those who seek to retain money in a selfish way. They look upon it as that which will make them self-sufficient in the future; and therefore they grudge to spend it even on present necessity. The times will be grievous when the avaricious increase. "Boastful." Derived from a word signifying "a wandering about," this word designated first the vagabond mountebanks, conjurors, quacksalvers, or exorcists, "full of empty and boastful professions of cures and other feats which they could accomplish." Men do not need to go about crying up, advertising, that which is of great value. What men generally boast of is some external advantage which is of little consequence in comparison with the moral worth which should be associated with it. The times will be grievous when the gift is exalted above the moral use to which it is put. "Haughty." The haughty are literally, in the Greek, those who *show themselves above their fellows*. In the glass of their own minds, they behold themselves standing along with others; and the comparison they make is in their own favour. Their estimate is false in respect of the importance attached to that in which they pride themselves, and in respect of the importance attached to that for which they despise others. Birth is an advantage, but not the only advantage, nor the greatest advantage, and must be taken along with service and character. In the grievous times there will be a great amount of pride. "Railers." The word is "blasphemers," but it would be inconsistent with holding the form of godliness to think of blasphemers in the usual sense in English. It is better, therefore, to think of those who use evil words to each other, *i.e.* words of contempt, or words of bitterness. There is to be a large development of evil-speaking in the grievous times. "Disobedient to parents." Selfishness is early to show itself in the form of self-will. The young generation are to show impatience of being ruled by their parents, which is sure to grow into impatience in respect of all rightful rule. In the grievous times there is to be a large development of lawlessness, beginning in the family circle. "Unthankful." Those who are allowed to have their own way in early life are not likely to grow up to show gratitude to parents for what they have sacrificed for them, nor are they likely to show gratitude in the ordinary intercourse of life, nor can we think of them showing gratitude to God for his mercies. Ingratitude is to be a striking feature of the grievous times. "Unholy." There are certain sanctities which are everlasting, which are anterior to all law and custom, which belong to the Divine constitution of things, *e.g.* the sanctities of the marriage bond. The

unholy are those who have no reverence or love in their hearts for these everlasting sanctities. In the grievous times the most sacred bonds are to be disregarded. "Without natural affection." Affection is that which sweetens life. In the grievous times affection is to die out, even for those for whom nature specially claims affection. Parents will act unnaturally toward their children. "Implacable." The word supposes a state of variance. In the grievous times men are not to come to terms with those who have given them offence, but are to pursue them with all the might of their vengeance. "Slanderers." They are not to be content with pouring contempt and bitterness on one another in ordinary evil-speaking, but they are to attack one another with falsehoods. Thus the diabolic character is to be developed in the grievous times. "Without self-control." With self-will uncurbed in early life, it is not to be wondered at that the men of the grievous times are to be men who have lost self-control. "Fierce." In the grievous times there will be loss of self-control, proceeding to deeds of violence. "No lovers of good." In keeping with the personal reference before and after, we prefer to translate, "no lovers of good men." With evil so active in them, the presence of good men will be burdensome to them. They are therefore likely to make the times grievous to the good, by unjustly treating them. "Traitors." Fidelity is the sacred bond that joins friend to friend. In the grievous times friend will be often found betraying friend. "Headstrong." In the grievous times men will go to daring lengths. "Puffed up." The explanation of their daringness is, that they have no right sense of their own position before God—their insignificance, impotence, and responsibility. "Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God." Men will be daring especially in sensual gratification. Pleasure will be preferred to God. "Holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof." The remarkable thing is that the men who have been described (we do not need to think of the characteristics being all combined) should hold a form of godliness. The relation of the form of godliness to the men who make the grievous times, is that it conceals their true character. It is self throughout, in a more or less hateful form, and therefore the real power of godliness is denied. But it does not appear so nakedly add hatefully to be self where there is a form of acknowledging God. The relation of the form of godliness to the grievous times is, that it allows evil to work more insidiously. It is not so difficult to meet pure heathenism as it is to meet a Christianity that has become heathenish. *Advice.* "From these also turn away." Paul would have things put on a basis of reality. Between Timothy and such men there could be no sympathy. Why keep up a semblance of fellowship? Both for them and for him it was better that the line of demarcation should be drawn, and that all further intercourse should proceed on the footing that they did not belong to the same Christian society.

II. THE MEN OF THE GRIEVOUS TIMES ANTICIPATED. "For of these." The apostle follows up his description of the men of the evil times by the advice to turn away from them, as though they were already present. The explanation he gives is that there were forerunners of them, men of the same spiritual kith. *Characteristics.* 1. *Influence with women.* (1) *Manner of their influence.* "Are they that creep into houses, and take captive silly women." Their converts were among women, which was not matter of reproach to them. But it was matter of reproach that it was women so habitually that they sought to influence, and that they did not go openly about the work of influencing them. They crept into houses, as though they did not wish to be seen. And that mode of entrance suggested the employment of other methods than the direct force of truth. By the methods employed they got the women completely into their power. It was matter of reproach to the women that they gave themselves up to such teachers, and therefore they are called silly women. (2) *Explanation of their influence.* "Laden with sins, led away by divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." They were not women of the right stamp. In relation to their past they were laden with sins. In relation to their present they were led away by divers lusts—led away to divers, and even conflicting, sources of gratification. They had a salve for their conscience, and yet a salve that allowed continued gratification. This salve was supplied by the false teachers. They were always getting some new point from them, which gave satisfaction for the time, but they never came any nearer resting in the truth. The reason was that they had not the right moral conditions. Their object was, not to get such truth (to be found in the gospel) as would have delivered them from the guilt of their sins and the power of their lusts, but to have

lengthened out to them a mingling of sensual and intellectual gratification. 2. *Withstanding the truth.* (1) *Type of their opposition.* "And like as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also withstand the truth; men corrupted in mind, reprobate concerning the faith." The apostle here makes use of Hebrew tradition. Jannes and Jambres are not mentioned in the Old Testament, but Hebrew tradition identifies them with the chief of the magicians who withstood Moses. Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and it became a serpent; and the magicians "they also did in like manner with their enchantments." It is also recorded that they succeeded in imitating the first two plagues. They thus withstood Moses—stood between him and the effect which his miracles were intended to produce on Pharaoh. So the false teachers produced a spurious imitation of the truth, teaching what resembled the gospel without being the gospel. As the gospel teachers had also to a late period (Gal. iii. 5) the power of working miracles, so we can understand that these teachers made use of magical arts in confirmation of their quasi-gospel teaching. They thus withstood the truth—came between the gospel and the effect it was fitted to produce. In thus acting they were corrupted in mind; their motives were not good. Their object was not to advance the truth, or to benefit those whom they taught, but to advance themselves and to obtain their own ends with their female converts. They were also reprobate concerning the faith; they were making it abundantly clear that their adherence to the faith was a complete failure. (2) *Type of their defeat.* "But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be evident unto all men, as theirs also came to be." So Luther used to say of the priests by whom he was opposed. The false teachers used secret and spurious methods with success; but, though they might wax worse and worse themselves (ver. 13), the time of their exposure was come. So was it with Jannes and Jambres. They were in undisturbed possession of power till Moses appeared on the scene. They seemed to be succeeding when they turned their own rods into serpents; but they suffered defeat when Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. They seemed to be recovering their success when they imitated the first plague, and again when they imitated the second plague; but they were baffled in their attempt to imitate the third plague. They were in connection with another plague shown to be defeated, when they could not stand before Moses because of the boils. Moses succeeded in getting the children of Israel out of Egypt; and Hebrew tradition tells that Jannes and Jambres perished in the Red Sea. This is the history of all false teaching, of all spiritual trickery. It may succeed for a time, but its very success often works its ruin. The time comes when its impostures are found out, and it can proceed no further. So we can believe that the great development of evil in the last days will end in complete exposure, and in the brilliant triumph of good.

III. CONTRAST IN TIMOTHY. 1. *Timothy reminded of his conduct at a former period, which was a following of Paul as his guiding star.* (1) *A leading up to sufferings.* "But thou didst follow my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, long-suffering, love, patience, persecutions, sufferings." The period referred to is Timothy's *early ministry*. He then acted as assistant to Paul, and what Paul gratefully calls to mind was his close following of him as a disciple. He not only followed him so as to be familiar with details, but followed him so as to direct his course by what he saw in him. The great lines of his teaching, the great lines of his conduct, Timothy made his own. The special purpose of his life (ruling so many details), which was to spread the gospel of Christ, was also after Paul. So, too, was his disposition towards Christ, viz. faith, especially in his power to make his gospel to tell upon men. So, too, was his disposition toward opponents, viz. his long-suffering with their bitter opposition. So, too, was his disposition toward those in whose interest he laboured, viz. love for their souls. So, too, was his disposition under all the adverse conditions of his ministry, as appointed for him, viz. patience. This forms a point of transition to past troublous times when Paul was persecuted, and persecuted so as to be a sufferer in many ways. Even to the apostle's persecutions and sufferings Timothy's following extended; i.e. he thoroughly appreciated the fidelity which led to them and brave bearing under them. They may have had to do with his joining the apostle, and determined his own relation to persecutions and sufferings. (2) *Sufferings specified.* "What things befell me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured." At Antioch he suffered expulsion. At Iconium he had to flee from maltreatment, particularly stoning. At Lystra,

under Jewish instigation, the mob stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. Such were the persecutions, the last especially sharp and extreme, under which Paul bore up, of which Timothy had a distinct impression, and which were fitted to embolden him still. (3) *Comfortable issue of the sufferings.* "And out of them all the Lord delivered me." He was cared for by the great Head of the Church, to whom all power in earth had been committed, to whom it belonged to order the earthly destiny of his servants. The Lord, who had more work for him to do, delivered him out of all the machinations of his enemies—gave him up to sorrowing friends when he was left for dead by his enemies. 2. *Timothy forewarned.* (1) *Regarding persecutions.* "Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." To live godly is to take the rule of our life from God. This can only be carried out in communion with Christ Jesus. Were all living according to the Divine rule around us, we should be abundantly encouraged. But seeing we live in the midst of so many who hate goodness and do not like to be reminded of God, we must expect to suffer persecution, *i.e.* to be misjudged, to be opposed, to be assailed, if our godliness is active and aggressive against evil, as it should be. We must have a mind to live godly, whatever consequences it entails. It was because he lived according to the Divine rule that Paul was stoned. As the principle involved was universal, Timothy, in proportion to the vitality of his godliness, must expect to suffer persecution. (2) *Regarding evil men, and especially one class of them.* "But evil men and impostors shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." Of the evil men that make persecutions, the worst specimens had not yet been seen. The rule is that good men wax better and better, the good men of one generation outstripping the good men of former generations. This may not apply to particular specimens, for we do not find any to outstrip Paul. But it is true of good men as a class that, with better helps, more experience to go by, better education, better books, better methods, better organization, they are of more value to the society to which they belong. We have laymen in our Churches now whose Christian enlightenment and activity is above what any previous generation has seen. While the good are better, the bad are worse. This applies especially to the class specified, who, with reference to what has before been said, are called impostors, or tricksters in religion. The original reference of the word is to those who chanted their spells in a sort of howl. We have worse specimens of withstanders of the truth than Jannes and Jambres were, or their successors in the early times of Christianity. Infidels are a worse class of men now than they were half a century ago. The incantations used in the free-thinking press are of a more dangerous nature than any potions or howlings that were resorted to by magicians of old. Our free-thinkers are deceivers; they habitually subject Scripture to the most unfair treatment. And deceiving, they are also deceived; conscious of their own trickery, they do not subject the statements of their friends to examination, but are known for their amazing credulity. 3. *Timothy incited to present duty founded on past early training.* (1) *Early teaching.* "But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned." Timothy was no longer in the position of the child taught, but in the position of a teacher of others. To one in that position it might have been thought that the appropriate thing would have been advice about his reading—and he does appear to have had books and parchments from the apostles—but the advice which he gives him here is to continue in the things which he had learned, *i.e.* as a child. And there was really nothing better for him; nothing except this, that the Messiah whom Lois and Eunice taught him to look forward to was now come, and that there had been done to him and by him all that the Old Testament Scriptures had said of him. And so to those who are grown up, and have power to think and to read and to grasp things with a firm grasp, there is never anything better than the old story of Jesus and his love, learned at a mother's knee. (2) *Early teaching along with early convictions.* "And hast been assured of." We should read, "Thou didst learn, and wast assured of." It is Timothy's early convictions that we are to think of. He not only got the teaching from Lois and Eunice, but it became matter of personal conviction to him. "He could set to his own seal to what he had been taught. He knew the worth of a mother's religion in the peace, restraint, hope, it brought into his own soul. It was a legitimate argument for Paul to use with Timothy, not to turn his back on his early convictions, to hold to the God of his childhood. When life was lived according to God's ideas, such as Timothy's was, he was not

to be inconsistent and to make the latter part disagree with the former. "There is but one way of making all our days one, because one love, one hope, one joy, one aim, binds them all together; and that is by taking the abiding Christ for ours, and abiding in him all our days. Our true progress consists, not in growing away from Jesus, but in growing up into him; not in passing through and leaving behind the first convictions of him as Saviour, but in having these verified by the experience of years, deepened and cleared, unfolded and ordered into a larger though still incomplete whole." (3) *Personal element in teaching.* "Knowing of whom [what persons] thou hast learned them." "Timothy was supposed to have a complete set of recollections from his mother woven into his very feeling of the truth itself. It was more true, because it had been taught by her. There was even a sense of her loving personality in it, by which it had always been, and was always to be endeared. On the other hand, it will be always found that every kind of teaching in religion which adds no personal interest or attraction to the truth, sheds no light upon it from a good and beautiful life, is nearly or quite worthless. And here is the privilege of a genuinely Christian father and mother in their teaching, that they pass into the heart's feeling of their child, side by side with God's truth, to be for ever identified with it, and to be, themselves, lived on and over with it, in the dear eternity it gives him." (4) *When teaching begins.* "And that from a babe thou hast known." Those who carry the idea of individual responsibility through everything have a difficulty here in the dating of religious instruction from the very earliest age. James Mill, the author of the 'History of India,' taking the education of his more remarkable son, John Stuart Mill, into his own hands, proceeded on the principle that a religious upbringing would be an interference with free development, and systematically kept all religious ideas out of his mind till he considered him able to form an independent and unbiassed judgment upon the subject of religion. Our objection to that course is that it is a virtual selling of the child to the devil. If God and truth are not presented to the mind till a matured judgment can be formed, it is not as though there had not been experience, but the mind is already warped and religion is placed at a fearful disadvantage. Eunice proceeded on the right principle when she seized the earliest opportunity of influencing the mind of Timothy in favour of religion. (5) *Scriptural teaching.* (a) *Name.* "The sacred writings." The name is suggestive, in the first place, of a written revelation, which has the advantage over oral tradition (the form of revelation which obtained for the first two or three thousand years) in that it does not lie so open to the action of prejudice. Men may come with all manner of prejudices to it, but it is there to witness for itself to every unprejudiced mind. The name is suggestive, in the second place, of many writers being employed in the communication of Divine truth, which is much better than one with his particular idiosyncrasy entering into his writings, inasmuch as all classes of minds can be thus suited, and if they are not attracted by one mode of stating the truth, they may be attracted by another. The name is suggestive, in the third place, of writings connected with religion, such as there do not seem to have been in connection with the religions of Greece and Rome. The Bible can be employed for the instruction of children, inasmuch as it is truly a child's book as well as a man's book. What is needed, at the first stage at least, is truth in the concrete form; and this is to be found in the Bible, which, with some things hard to be understood, has yet many a simple statement and story that is fitted to fill the child's imagination and to touch the child's heart. Eunice had only the Old Testament Scriptures to draw upon: the Christian parent has now an immense advantage, in the addition of the New Testament, and especially of the four Gospels, and in the greater facilities which a printed Bible gives him for getting Bible images and lessons into the mind of the child. (b) *Property.* "Which are able to make thee wise unto salvation." They form a directory to salvation, containing all the information and pleading with the soul which are necessary. To one inexperienced in the ways of the world it is a great advantage to have a friend at hand, able on every occasion to give a sound advice, to expose fallacies, to put forward weighty considerations. Inexperienced in the ways of the world we certainly are, liable to be deceived by appearances, to be buoyed up with false hopes. In giving us the Scriptures, God acts the part of a friend, giving us the best advice, opening our eyes to reality, so that, with all our inexperience, it is as though we possessed boundless stores of wisdom. They are able to make wise unto salvation, but they may not; for

there are some who make themselves wiser than God's Word, and think they know better about things than God does, and so perish by being wise in their own conceits and refusing to be guided. (c) *Condition of efficiency.* "Through faith which is in Christ Jesus." The Scriptures cannot do more than make us wise unto salvation; they are not to be put in the place of Christ, whose connection with salvation is more than that of a directory—is of the most intimate nature, who is really the efficient Cause of salvation, the Receptacle of salvation; and they only do their work when they bring us up to Christ, and also induce in us that state of mind which is here called faith, which *instrumentally* appropriates the salvation which is in him.

IV. SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE. 1. *Ground of sufficiency.* "Every Scripture inspired of God." According to this translation the inspiration of Scripture is taught, not explicitly but implicitly. We are to regard it as taken for granted that Scripture is *God-breathed*. Inspiration extends to every part of Scripture. This is a doctrine of vital importance to the Church. Its bearing is that there is not only the absence of error, but the presence of positive perfection in relation to the whole want of man under the present order of things. The Divine influence, however operating, is guarantee that in Scripture, in its manifoldness, we have all fundamentally that needs to be said to man on the subject of religion, and in the form that is best fitted to have deep and lasting effect upon his spiritual nature as a whole. The difference is very perceptible in the post-apostolic literature. "Even where we recognize a lofty flight of the spirit as in the Ignatian Epistles, the inspiration repeatedly is merely a religious enthusiasm, a subjective romance, showing itself in an almost revelling desire for martyrdom, moving and even infectious; so that many who read an Ignatian Epistle for the first time feel themselves doubtless more excited and stirred than by a Pauline one; but this very feature proves that it is not really inspired; for the Spirit who founded the Church does not tolerate the extolling of one isolated tendency in the soul, and cannot bear such subjective partiality of view, be it ever so strong, ever so apparently admirable." 2. *Fourfold use.* "Is also profitable." In reading the Scriptures what we are to seek above all things is that the truth contained in them may be brought into contact with our minds for our profit. "For teaching." There is first a *revealing* power in the Bible. It teaches us much that we could not otherwise have known. It supplies us with what is necessary not only for a correct, but a lofty, conception of God. It acquaints us with our fallen state, and with God's dealings with us for our salvation. "For reproof." The *reproving* power of the Bible results from its great revealing power, along with the state in which it finds us. The light it sheds is not for our justification, but for our being convicted of departures both from truth and righteousness. "For correction." The *corrective* power of the Bible starts from our being convicted as out of the straight path. By proper directions, admonitions, warnings, encouragements, it brings us back into the straight path. "For instruction which is in righteousness." The *disciplinary* power of the Bible is specified as being within the sphere of righteousness. In the lofty demands it makes—the loftier the further we advance—it gives us the spiritual drill which makes for right habits. 3. *Completeness aimed at.* "That the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." The man of God is man according to the Divine idea. Many excellences go to make the complete man, intellectual, emotional, practical. God desires to see the complete man; and he has given the Bible for that end. The completeness thought of is that of man as a worker, producing good thoughts, good words, good actions. God desires to see the completely furnished worker, and he has given the Bible for that end. It is true that we come very far short of the Divine ideal of our humanity; the reason will be found to be that we neglect the help provided for us. We do not consult God, but our own prejudiced thoughts. Let us go back to the Bible, to be convicted of our error, and corrected, and severely exercised toward the complete man.—R. F.

EXPOSITION.

CHAPTER IV.

Ver. 1.—*In the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus for therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ*, A.V. and T.R.; and by for at, A.V. and T.R. I charge thee (*διαμαρτύρομαι*); as ch. ii. 14 and 1 Tim. v. 21 (where see note). The words *ὁν ἐνώ*, wanting in some of the best manuscripts, are “rejected by Griesbach, Tischendorf, Lachmann,” and by Huther, Alford, Ellicott, and others. The chapter opens rather abruptly without the connecting “therefore.” And by his appearing and his kingdom. The reading of the T.R., *κατὰ τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν, κ.τ.λ.*, “at his appearing and kingdom,” makes such excellent sense, and is in such perfect accordance with the usual grammar, and with the usual connection of events, that it is difficult not to believe that it is the right reading (see Matt. xxvii. 15, *κατὰ ἑορτήν*, “at the feast;” *κατὰ πᾶν σάββατον*, “on every sabbath;” Acts xiii. 27, *κατὰ τὴν ἡμέραν*, “in the day;” Heb. iii. 8 for the grammar; and the universal language of Scripture and the Creeds connecting the judgment with the Lord’s appearing and kingdom). On the other hand, the reading *καὶ* is almost impossible to construe. No two commentators scarcely are agreed how to do so. Some take *τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν καὶ τὴν βασιλείαν* as the object governed by *διαμαρτύρομαι*, as in the LXX. of Deut. iv. 26, “I call to witness . . . Christ’s epiphany and kingdom,” taking *διαμαρτύρομαι* in two senses or two constructions. Others take them as the accusatives of the things sworn by, “I charge thee before God and Jesus Christ, and by his epiphany and kingdom,” as Mark v. 7, *τὸν Θεόν*, “by God;” Acts xix. 13, *τὸν Ἰησοῦν*, “by Jesus;” 1 Thess. v. 27, *τὸν Κύριον*, “by the Lord.” But how awkward such a separation of the thing sworn by from the verb is, and how unnatural it is to couple with *καὶ* the two ideas, “before God” and “by Christ’s epiphany,” and how absolutely without example such a swearing by Christ’s epiphany and kingdom is, nobody needs to be told. Others, as Huther, try to get over part at least of this awkwardness by taking the two *καὶ*s as “both;” “by both his epiphany and his kingdom.” Ellicott explains it by saying that as you could not put “the epiphany and the kingdom” in dependence upon *ἐνώπιον* (as if they were persons like God and Christ), they “naturally pass into the accusative.” But surely this is all thoroughly unsatisfactory. The T.R. is perfectly easy and simple. *Appearing* (*ἐπιφάνεια*); ver. 8; ch. i. 10; 2 Thess. ii. 8; 1 Tim. vi. 14; Titus ii. 13. *His king-*

dom. So in the Nicene Creed: “He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead: whose kingdom shall have no end” (comp. Matt. xxv. 31, followed by the judgment).

Ver. 2.—*Teaching for doctrine*, A.V. **Preach the Word** (*κήρυξον τὸν λόγον*). It is impossible to exaggerate the dignity and importance here given to preaching by its being made the subject of so solemn and awful an adjuration as that in ver. 1 (compare the designation of *κήρυξ* which St. Paul gives to himself in 1 Tim. ii. 7; ch. i. 11). **Be instant** (*ἐπιστηθι*). The force of the exhortation must be found, not in the verb itself taken alone, but by coupling *ἐνκαίρως ἀκαίρως* closely with it. Be at your work, attend to it always, in and out of season; let nothing stop you; be always ready, always at hand. **Reprove** (*ἐλεγξον*); see ch. iii. 16, note (comp. Matt. xviii. 15; Eph. v. 11; 1 Tim. v. 20). Generally with the idea of bringing the fault home to the offender. **Rebuke** (*ἐπιτιμῶν*); a stronger word than *ἐλεγξον*, implying more of authority and less of argument (Matt. viii. 26; xvii. 18; Luke xix. 39; Jude 9, etc.). **Exhort** (*παρακλέσων*). Sometimes the sense of “exhort,” and sometimes that of “comfort,” predominates (see 1 Tim. ii. 1; vi. 2, etc.). Every way of strengthening and establishing souls in the fear and love of God is to be tried, and that with all long-suffering and teaching. (For *μακροθυμία*, see ch. iii. 10, note.) For “teaching” or “doctrine” (*διδασχί*), St. Paul more frequently uses *διδασκαλία* in the pastoral Epistles (1 Tim. i. 10; iv. 6, 13, 16; v. 17; ch. iii. 10, 16, etc.); but there does not seem to be any great difference of meaning. Possibly *διδασχί* points more to the act of teaching. The use of it here, coupled with “long-suffering,” directs that the man of God, whether he preaches, reproveth, rebukes, or exhorts, is always to be a patient teacher of God’s Word and truth.

Ver. 3.—*The sound for sound*, A.V.; *having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts for after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears*, A.V. **The sound** (*τῆς ὑγιανοσύνης*). Nothing is gained by the addition of the article in English. The phrase, *ἡ ὑγιαίνουσα διδασκαλία*, is characteristic of the pastoral Epistles, having arisen, no doubt, from the growth of heresy (see 1 Tim. i. 10; vi. 3. ch. i. 13; Titus i. 9, 13; ii. 1; also Titus ii. 8). In classical Greek, *ὑγιής* is frequently applied to words, sentiments, advice, etc., in the sense of “sound,” “wise;” and *ὑγιαίνειν* is also applied to the mind and

character. Endure (*ἀνέχονται*); usually, as Bishop Ellicott observes, applied by St. Paul to persons as the object, as elsewhere in the New Testament (Matt. xvii. 17; Acts xviii. 14; Eph. iv. 2, etc.); but not invariably (see 2 Thess. i. 4; so too Heb. xiii. 22). In classical Greek, *ἀνέχεσθαι*, followed by persons or things, usually governs an accusative case, if any, but a genitive frequently in Plato. Having itching ears (*κνηθόμενοι τὴν ἀκοήν*); only here in the New Testament. The phrase, *κνησέως ὥταν*, is ascribed by Plutarch to Plato (Alford), "scratching the (itching) ear;" *κνᾶσθαι τὰ ὦτα*, "to tickle the ears" (Lucian); *ἀποκνᾶουσιν ἡμῶν τὰ ὦτα* (Philo, ap. Ellicott). The verb *κνᾶω* (i.q. *κνῶ*) means "to scratch;" "to tickle," and in the passive "to itch." Will heap to themselves (*ἐπισωρεύουσιν*); a contemptuous word (found only here in the New Testament, and nowhere in early classical Greek), implying the indiscriminate multiplication of teachers (compare our use of "exaggerate"). The simple *σωρεύειν* occurs in ch. iii. 6. After their own lusts. The measure of the number or the quality of their self-chosen teachers will be their own insatiable and ever-varying fancies and mental appetites, not the desire to be taught God's truth by teachers sent from God. Compare Jeroboam's conduct in ordaining a feast "in the month which he had devised of his own heart" (1 Kings xii. 33).

Ver. 4.—*Will turn for they shall turn, A.V.; turn aside for shall be turned, A.V. Will turn away, etc.* The sober, sound doctrine of the Word of God, teaching self-discipline, humility, and purity of heart and life, will not assuage their itching ears, and therefore they will turn away from it, and go after more congenial fables—those taught by the heretics. Turn aside (*ἐκτραπήσονται*); as 1 Tim. i. 6, note. Fables (*μύθους*); see 1 Tim. i. 4; iv. 7; Titus i. 14; 2 Pet. i. 16 (on the Jewish origin of these fables, see Bishop Ellicott's note on 1 Tim. i. 4).

Ver. 5.—*Be thou sober for watch thou, A.V.; suffer hardship for endure afflictions, A.V.; fulfil for make full proof of, A.V. Be thou sober (νήφει);* as 1 Thess. v. 6, 8; 1 Pet. i. 13; iv. 7; v. 8. The adjective *νήφελος* occurs in 1 Tim. iii. 2 (where see note), 11; Titus ii. 2. Here "Be sober in all things" clearly does not refer to literal sobriety, which Timothy was in little danger of transgressing (1 Tim. v. 23), but comprehends clearness, calmness, steadiness, and moderation in all things. Suffer hardship (*κακοπάθεισον*); as ch. ii. 3 (T.R.) and 9. An evangelist (*εὐαγγελιστοῦ*); one whose business it is to preach the gospel, according to Matt. xi. 5. The verb *εὐαγγελίζω*, "to preach the gospel," and *εὐαγγέλιον*, "the gospel," are of very frequent use in the New

Testament. But *εὐαγγελιστής*, an evangelist, occurs elsewhere only in Acts xxi. 8 and Eph. iv. 11. Fulfil thy ministry. This is rather a weak rendering of the Greek *πληροφόρησον*, adopted also in the R.V. of Luke i. 1. The verb occurs elsewhere in Luke i. 1; Rom. iv. 21; xiv. 5, and ver. 17 of this chapter. The phrase is metaphorical, but it is uncertain whether the metaphor is that of a ship borne along by full sails, or of full measure given. If the former is the metaphor, then the derived meaning, when applied to persons, is that of full persuasion, entire and implicit faith, which carries men forward in a bold and unwavering course; or, when applied to things, that of being undoubtedly believed. But if the metaphor is taken from "bringing full measure," then the sense in the passive voice when applied to persons will be "to be fully satisfied," i.e. to have full assurance, and, when applied to things, "to be fully believed" (Liddell and Scott). Applying the last metaphor to the passage before us, the sense will be "discharge thy ministry to the full." Let there be no stint of ministerial labour, but carry it out in its completeness, and to the end.

Ver. 6.—*Already being offered for now ready to be offered, A.V.; come for at hand, A.V. I am already being offered.* The *ἐνέ* is emphatic, in contrast with the *σὺ* of ver. 5: "Thou, who hast still life before thee, suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. I can do so no longer, for my martyrdom has already commenced, and my end is close at hand. Thou must take my place in the great conflict." *Am . . . being offered (σπένδομαι); am being poured out,* as the drink offering, or libation, is poured out. St. Paul uses the same figure in Phil. ii. 17, where he couples it with the sacrifice and service (or offering up) of the faith of the Philippian by himself as the priest, and looks upon the pouring out of his own life as the completion of that sacrifice (see Ellicott on Phil.). "The libation always formed the conclusion of the sacrifice, and so the apostle's martyrdom closed his apostolic service" (Huther), which had been a continual sacrifice, in which he had been the ministering priest (Rom. xv. 16). So that the use of *σπένδομαι* here exactly agrees with that in Phil. ii. 17. "My sacrificial work," St. Paul says, "being now finished and ended, I am performing the last solemn act, the pouring out of my own life in martyrdom, to which I shall pass out of the prison where I now am." The time of my departure (*τῆς ἐμῆς ἀναλῶσεως*). The word is found nowhere else in the New Testament, but St. Paul uses the verb *ἀναλῶσαι*, "to depart," in Phil. i. 23, where, the verb being in the active voice, the metaphor clearly is from weighing anchor, as in com-

mon use in classical Greek; hence simply "to depart." The classical use of ἀνάσσει, rather favours the sense, either of "release" or of "dissolution." But St. Paul's use of ἀνάσσει in Phil. i. 23, and the frequent use of the same verb in the LXX. and by Josephus, in the sense of "to depart," favours the rendering of ἀνάσσει by "departure," as in the A.V. and R.V. *Is come*; rather, *is at hand* (ἐφάσθηκε); the same verb as ἐπίστημι in ver. 2. (On the difference between ἐνέστηκε "is come") and ἐφάσθηκε ("is at hand"), see Alford on 2 Thess. ii. 2, and comp. Acts xxii. 20.)

Ver. 7.—*The for a, A.V.; the for my, A.V.* I have fought the good fight; as 1 Tim. vi. 12 (τὸν ἀγῶνα τὸν καλόν), meaning that, however honourable the contests of the games were deemed, the Christian contest was far more honourable than them all. The word "fight" does not adequately express τὸν ἀγῶνα, which embraces all kinds of contests—chariot-race, foot-race, wrestling, etc. "I have played out the honourable game" would give the sense, though inelegantly. The course (τὸν δρόμον); Acts xiii. 25; xx. 24. The runner in the race had a definite δρόμος, or course to run, marked out for him. St. Paul's life was that course, and he knew that he had run it out. *I have kept the faith.* St. Paul here quits metaphor and explains the foregoing figures. Through his long eventful course, in spite of all difficulties, conflicts, dangers, and temptations, he had kept the faith of Jesus Christ committed to him, inviolable, unadulterated, whole, and complete. He had not shrunk from confessing it when death stared him in the face; he had not corrupted it to meet the views of Jews or Gentiles; with courage and resolution and perseverance he had kept it to the end. Oh! let Timothy do the same.

Ver. 8.—*The for a, A.V.; to me for me, A.V.; only to me for to me only, A.V.; also to all them for unto all them also, A.V.; have loved for love.* Henceforth (λοιπόν); as Heb. x. 13. The work of conflict being over, it only remains to receive the crown. The crown of righteousness means that crown the possession of which marks the wearer as righteous before God. The analogous phrases are, "the crown of glory" (1 Pet. v. 4) and "the crown of life" (Jas. i. 12; Rev. ii. 10). The righteousness, the glory, and the life of the saints are conceived as displayed in crowns, as the kingly dignity is in the crown of royalty. The righteous Judge (κριτής). In Acts x. 42 the Lord Jesus is said to be ordained of God Κριτὴς ζώντων καὶ νεκρῶν, "the Judge of quick and dead;" and in Heb. xii. 23 we read, Κριτὴ θεῶ πάντων, "God the Judge of all." But nowhere else, either in the Old Testament

or the New Testament, is this term applied directly either to God or to Christ. Surely its use here is influenced by the preceding metaphor of the ἀγῶν and the δρόμος and the στέφανος; and "the righteous Judge" is the impartial βραβεύς, or "judge," who assigned the prizes at the games to those who had fairly won them. And this is the proper meaning of κριτής, "the umpire," applied, especially at Athens, to the "judges" at the poetic contests (Liddell and Scott). Thucydides contrasts the κριτής and the ἀγωνιστής; Aristophanes the κριταὶ and the θεαταί, the "spectators;" and the word "critic" is derived from this meaning of κριτής and κριτικός. The whole picture is that of the apostle running his noble race of righteousness to the very end, and of the Lord himself assigning to him the well-earned crown of victory in the presence of heaven and earth assembled for the solemnity of that great day. *That have loved his appearing.* It will be a characteristic of those who will be crowned at that day that all the time they were fighting the good fight they were looking forward with hope and desire for their Lord's appearing and kingdom. "Thy kingdom come" was their desire and their petition. They will be able to say at that day, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation" (Isa. xxv. 9). *His appearing;* as in ver. 2.

Ver. 9.—*Do thy diligence (σπουδασον);* see ch. ii. 15, note. St. Paul's affectionate longing for Timothy's company in present danger and desertion is very touching. (For the chronological bearing of this passage, see Introduction.)

Ver. 10.—*Forsook for hath forsaken, A.V.; went for is departed, A.V.; to for unto, A.V.* (twice). Demas. Nothing more is known of Demas than what is gathered from the mention of him in Col. iv. 14 and Philem. 24. We learn from those passages that he was a fellow-labourer of the apostle, and it is remarkable that in them both he is coupled, as here, with Luke and Mark (Col. iv. 10). (See Introduction.) *Having loved this present world.* It would appear from this that Demas had not the faith or the courage to run the risk of sharing St. Paul's imminent martyrdom at Rome, but left him, while he was free to do so, under pretence of an urgent call to Thessalonica; just as Mark left Paul and Barnabas (Acts xiii. 13). But there is no ground to believe that he was an apostate from the faith. The coupling together of Demas and Aristarchus in Philem. 24 suggests that Demas may have been a Thessalonian, as we know that Aristarchus was (Acts xx. 4). *Demas*

is thought to be a shortened form of *Demarchus*. If so, we have a slight additional indication of his being a Thessalonian, as compounds with *archos* or *arches* would seem to have been common in Thessalonica (compare *Aristarchus* and *πολιτάρχης*, Acts xvii. 6, 8). *Crescens* (*Κρήσκης*); only mentioned here. It is a Latin name, like *Πόδιος*, *Pudens*, in ver. 21. There was a cynic philosopher of this name in the second century, a great enemy of the Christians. The tradition ('Apost. Constit.' vii. 46) that he preached the gospel in Galatia is probably derived from this passage. Titus, etc. The last mention of Titus, not reckoning the Epistle to Titus, is that in 2 Cor. xii. 18, from which it appears that St. Paul had sent him to Corinth just before his own last visit to that city. How the interval was filled up, and where Titus passed the time, we know not. He is not once named in the Acts of the Apostles, nor in any of St. Paul's Epistles written during his first imprisonment. But we gather from Titus i. 5 that he accompanied St. Paul to Crete, presumably after the apostle's return from Spain; that he was left there for a time to organize the Church; that later he joined the apostle at Nicopolis (Titus iii. 12), and, doubtless by St. Paul's desire, went to Dalmatia, as mentioned in this tenth verse. And here our knowledge of him ends. Tradition pretty consistently makes him Bishop of Gortyna, in Crete, where are the ruins of a very ancient church dedicated to St. Titus, in which service is occasionally performed by priests from the neighbourhood (Dean Howson, in 'Dict. of Bible;' art. "Titus").

Ver. 11.—*Useful for profitable*, A.V.; *ministering for the ministry*, A.V. Luke; probably a shortened form of *Lucanus*. Luke was with St. Paul in his voyage to Rome (Acts xxvii. 1; xxviii. 11, 16), and when he wrote the Epistles to the Colossians and Philemon (Col. iv. 14; Philem. 4), having doubtless composed the Acts of the Apostles during St. Paul's two years' imprisonment (Acts xxviii. 30). How he spent his time between that date and the mention of him here as still with St. Paul, we have no knowledge. But it looks as if he may have been in close personal attendance upon him all the time. If he had been permitted to write a supplement to the Acts, perhaps the repeated "we" would have shown this. Take Mark. Mark had apparently been recently reconciled to St. Paul when he wrote Col. iv. 10, and was with him when he wrote Philem. 24. We know nothing more of him till we learn from this passage that he was with or near to Timothy, and likely to accompany him to Rome in his last visit to St. Paul. He is mentioned again in 1 Pet. v. 13, as being with St.

Peter at Babylon. The expression, "take" (*ἀναλαβών*), seems to imply that Timothy was to pick him up on the way, as the word is used in Acts xx. 13, 14; and, though less certainly, in Acts xiii. 31. He is useful to me, etc. (*εὐχρηστος*); as ch. ii. 21 (where see note). This testimony to Mark's ministerial usefulness, at a time when his faithfulness and courage would be put to a severe test, is very satisfactory. For ministering (*εἰς διακονίαν*). It may be doubted whether *διακονία* here means "the ministry," as in the A.V. and 1 Tim. i. 12, or, as in the R.V., more generally "for ministering," i.e. for acting as an assistant to me in my apostolic labours. The words, "to me," favour the latter rendering. The sense would then be the same as that of the verb in Acts xix. 22, where we read that Timothy and Erastus "ministered unto him," i.e. to St. Paul, and that of *διηρέτης* applied to Mark in Acts xiii. 5.

Ver. 12.—*But for and*, A.V.; *sent for have sent*, A.V. Tychicus was with St. Paul when he wrote the Epistle to the Colossians (Col. iv. 7), as was also Timothy (Col. i. 1). The presence of Luke, Timothy, Tychicus, Mark, with Paul now, as then, is remarkable (see ver. 10, note). I sent to Ephesus. Theodoret (quoted by Alford, 'Proleg. to 2 Tim.' ch. ix. sect. 1) says, "It is plain from this that St. Timothy was not at this time living at Ephesus, but somewhere else." And that certainly is the natural inference at first sight. But Bishop Ellicott suggests the possibility of Tychicus being the bearer of the First Epistle to Timothy, written not very long before, and this being merely an allusion to that well-known fact. Another and more probable idea is that he was the bearer of this Epistle, that the object of his mission, like that of Artemas (Titus iii. 12), was to take Timothy's place at Ephesus during Timothy's absence at Rome, and that he is thus mentioned in the Epistle in order to commend him to the reverent regard of the Ephesian Church (Wordsworth). It is argued against this that *πρός σε* would have been the more natural expression after the analogy of Col. iv. 7, and Titus iii. 12. But this objection would be removed if we suppose that the Epistle was sent by another hand, and that it was very possible that Timothy might have started for Rome before Tychicus could arrive at Ephesus. He might have orders to visit Corinth or Macedonia on his way. (For the arguments for and against Timothy being at Ephesus at this time, see Alford's 'Proleg.' as above.)

Ver. 13.—*Bring when thou comest for when thou comest bring with thee*, A.V.; *especially for but especially*, A.V. The cloak (*τὸν φελάνην*, more properly written *φαιδῖλην*);

the Latin *pænula*, the thick overcoat or cloak. Only here in the New Testament. Some think it was the bag in which the books and parchments were packed. The parchments (*τάς μεμβράνας*). This, again, is a Latin word. It occurs only here in the New Testament. They would probably be for the apostle to write his Epistles on. Or they may have been valuable manuscripts of some kind. In ver. 20 we learn that St. Paul had lately been at Miletus; and in 1 Tim. i. 3 that he was then going to Macedonia. Troas would be on his way to Macedonia, Greece, and Rome (Acts xvi. 8, 9, 11), as it was on the return journey from Macedonia to Miletus (Acts xx. 5, 15). It should further be observed that the journey here indicated is the same as that referred to in 1 Tim. i. 3, which confirms the inevitable inference from this chapter that St. Paul, on his way to Rome from Miletus, whither he had come from Crete (Titus i. 5), passed through Troas, Macedonia, and Corinth (ver. 20), leaving Timothy at Ephesus. (See Introduction.)

Ver. 14.—*Will render to him for reward him, A.V. and T.R. Alexander*; apparently an Ephesian, as appears by the words, "of whom be thou ware also." It seems probable, though it is necessarily uncertain, that this Alexander is the same person as that mentioned in 1 Tim. i. 20 as "a blasphemer," which agrees exactly with what is here said of him, "he greatly withstood our words" (comp. Acts xiii. 45, "contradicted the things which were spoken by Paul, and blasphemed"). He may or may not be the same as the Alexander named in Acts xix. 33. Supposing the Alexander of 1 Tim. i. 20 and this place to be the same, the points of resemblance with the Alexander of Acts xix. 33 are that both resided at Ephesus, that both seem to have been Christians (see note on 1 Tim. i. 20), and both probably Jews, inasmuch as 1 Tim. i. relates entirely to Jewish heresies (vers. 4, 7, 8), and Acts xix. 33 expressly states that he was a Jew. The coppersmith (*ὁ χαλκεὺς*; only here in the New Testament); properly, a *coppersmith*, but used generally of any smith—silversmith, or goldsmith, or blacksmith. Did me much evil (*πολλὰ μοι κακὰ ἐνδείξατο*). This is a purely Hellenistic idiom, and is found in the LXX. of Gen. i. 15, 17; Song of the Three Children, 19; 2 Macc. xiii. 9. In classical Greek the verb *ἐνδείκνυμαι*, in the middle voice, "to display," can only be followed by a subjective quality, as "good will," "virtue," "long-suffering," an "opinion," and the like (see Alford, *in loc.*). And so it is used in 1 Tim. i. 16; Titus ii. 10; iii. 2. The question naturally arises—When and where did Alexander thus injure St. Paul?—at

Ephesus or at Rome? Bengel suggests Rome, and with great probability. Perhaps he did him evil by stirring up the Jews at Rome against the apostle at the time of "his first defence;" or by giving adverse testimony before the Roman tribunal, possibly accusing him of being seditious, and bringing up the riot at Ephesus as a proof of it; or in some other way, of which the memory has perished. Will render. The R.T. has the future, *ἀποδώσει* for the optative *ἀποδῶν*, "a late and incorrect form for *ἀποδοίην*" (Ellicott, *in loc.*).

Ver. 15.—*Withstood for Iath withstood, A.V. Of whom be thou ware (ὅν φυλάσσω).* This is the proper construction in classical Greek, the accusative of the person or thing, after *φυλάσσωμαι*. But it is only found in Acts xvi. 25. In Luke xii. 15 the equally correct phrase, *φυλάσσεσθε ἀπὸ τῆς πλεονεξίας*, is used. The inference from this caution to Timothy is that Alexander had left Rome and returned to his native Ephesus. The Jews were always on the move. He greatly withstood our words (*ἀντέστη*). For an exactly similar use, see Acts xiii. 8, where Elymas "withstood" Paul and Barnabas; and ch. iii. 8, where Jannes and Jambres "withstood" Moses. In this case we may be sure that Paul, in pleading for his life, did not omit to preach the gospel to his Gentile audience. Alexander tried to refute his words, not without effect. The apostle says "our words" (not "my words"), perhaps to associate with himself those other Christians who were with him. It certainly cannot mean "yours and mine," as Timothy was not with him when the "words" were spoken.

Ver. 16.—*Defence for answer, A.V.; no one took my part for no man stood with me, A.V.; all for all men, A.V.; may it not for I pray God it may not, A.V.; account for charge, A.V. Defence (ἀπολογία).* "The technical word in classical Greek for a defence in answer to an accusation;" as Acts xxii. 1 (where see note for further illustration), and Phil. i. 7. Took my part; *παρεγένετο* R.T., for *συμπαρεγένετο* T.R., which occurs elsewhere in the New Testament only in Luke xxiii. 48, in a somewhat different sense. The simple *παρίνομαι* is very common in the New Testament, but nowhere in the technical sense in which it is used here. In classical Greek both forms are common in the sense of "coming to aid," "standing by any one," "assisting." Here it represents the Latin *assistere* or *adesse* in its technical sense of "standing by" an accused person as friend or assistant, to aid and abet them in their defence. Powerful men sometimes brought such a multitude of assistants as to overawe the magistrate, as Orgetorix the Helvetian, when summoned to trial, appeared

with ten thousand followers, and so there was no trial. Paul, like his Lord and Master, of whom it is written, "All his disciples forsook him and fled," had no one to stand with him in his hour of need.

Ver. 17.—*But for notwithstanding, A.V.; by for with, A.V.; through for by, A.V.; message for preaching, A.V.; proclaimed for known, A.V.* Stood by me (μοι παρίστη); as in Acts xxvii. 23; Rom. xvi. 2 (where see also the use of *προστάτης*, a helper). Παρίσταναι means simply to stand by the side of a person—to be present. But, like παραγινώμαι, it acquires the meaning of standing by for the purpose of helping. The contrast between the timid faithless friends who failed him like a deceitful brook (Job vi. 15), and the faithfulness of the Lord who was a very present Help in trouble, is very striking. Strengthened me (ἐνεδυνάμωσέ με); see 1 Tim. i. 12, note, and Acts vi. 8. The message (κήρυγμα). The A.V. *preaching* is far better. St. Paul means that gospel which he was commissioned to preach, and which he did preach openly in full court when he was on his trial (see ver. 15, note). Might be fully proclaimed (πληροφορήθη); see ch. iv. 5, note; and comp. Rom. xv. 19. All the Gentiles might hear (comp. Phil. i. 12—14). The brave, unselfish spirit of the apostle thinking more of the proclamation of the gospel than of his own life, is truly admirable. I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. Surely there can be no doubt that, as Bengel says, this is a quotation from Ps. xxii. 20, 21. The verb ἐρρύσθη, "I was delivered," comes from the twentieth verse, "Deliver my soul from the sword," and the phrase, ἐκ στόματος λέοντος, is found *verbatim* in ver. 21. The apostle means his deliverance from the executioner's sword. In the next verse we find both the words *ρύσεται* and *σώσει*, and the whole tone of the psalm breathes the same spirit as the saying, "The Lord stood by me." Dean Alford's suggestion that the lion here is Satan, as in 1 Pet. v. 8, and the danger which the apostle escaped was not death, which he did not fear, but betraying the gospel under the fear of death, is ingenious, but rather far-fetched, though not impossible. It may possibly have been part of what was in St. Paul's mind.

Ver. 18.—*The Lord for and the Lord, A.V. and T.B.; will for shall, A.V.; save for preserve, A.V.; the glory for glory, A.V.* Deliver me . . . save me (see preceding note). The language here is also very like that of the Lord's Prayer: ῥῖσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ σου γὰρ ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία . . . καὶ ἡ δόξα, εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας. Ἀμήν (Matt. vi. 13). Every evil work. Alford goes altogether astray in his remarks on this passage. Interpreted by the Lord's Prayer, and by its own internal evidence, the meaning clearly

is, "The Lord, who stood by me at my trial, will continue to be my Saviour. He will deliver me from every evil design of mine enemies, and from all the wiles and assaults of the devil, in short, from the whole power of evil, and will bring me safe into his own kingdom of light and righteousness." There is a strong contrast, as Bengel pithily observes, between "the evil work" and "his heavenly kingdom." A triumphant martyrdom is as true a deliverance as escape from death. Compare our Lord's promise, "There shall not an hair of your head perish" (Luke xxi. 18 compared with ver. 16). St. Paul's confidence simply is that the Lord would, in his own good time and way, transfer him from this present evil world, and from the powers of darkness, into his eternal kingdom of light and righteousness.

Ver. 19.—*House for household, A.V. Prisca and Aquila.* Prisca is elsewhere always called *Priscilla* (Acts xviii. 2, 18, 26; Rom. xvi. 3; 1 Cor. xvi. 19). A similar variation of names is seen in *Drusa* and *Drusilla*, *Livia* and *Livella*, etc. She is named before her husband, as here in Acts xviii. 18; Rom. xvi. 3. The mention of them here is in favour of Timothy being at Ephesus at this time, as Ephesus is one of the places where they were wont to sojourn (Acts xviii. 19, 26). The house (as in A.V. ch. i. 16) of Onesiphorus (see ch. i. 16, 18, note). This repetition of the "house of Onesiphorus" is almost conclusive as to the recent death of Onesiphorus himself.

Ver. 20.—*I left for have I left, A.V.; Miletus for Milethum, A.V.* Erastus abode at Corinth. We learn from Rom. xvi. 3 that Erastus was the chamberlain of Corinth, which accounts for his abiding there. He was one of St. Paul's companions in his missionary journey, and we learn from Acts xix. 22 that he was sent by St. Paul with Timothy into Macedonia just before the great riot at Ephesus. The mention of him here clearly indicates that St. Paul had gone from Troas, where he left his cloak, to Corinth on his way to Rome. Trophimus is first mentioned in Acts xx. 4, where we learn that he was an Asiatic, and more definitely in Acts xxi. 29, that he was an Ephesian. He had travelled with St. Paul's party from Macedonia to Troas, and thence to Miletus and Jerusalem, where we lose sight of him, till we find him again in this passage journeying towards Rome with St. Paul and others, but stopped at Miletus by sickness. *Miletus*, not *Milethum*, is the correct form.

Ver. 21.—*Saluteth for greeteth, A.V.* Do thy diligence (σπουδασον); see ver. 9 and ch. ii. 15, note. Before winter; lest, when winter storms come, it be impossible to do so. St. Paul's longing to have Timothy with him is apparent throughout. *Epulius*; mentioned

nowhere else. The name is not uncommon as a Greek name, and appears also in the patronymic *Eubulides*, and the female name *Eubule*. And *Pudens*, and *Linus*, and *Claudia*. Of these persons *Linus* is probably the same as is mentioned by Irenæus and Eusebius as the first Bishop of Rome. Irenæus (iii. 111, 3) says, "When the apostles, therefore, had founded the Church (of Rome) they entrusted the office (*λειτουργίαν*) of the episcopate to *Linus*, of whom Paul makes mention in his Epistles to Timothy." Eusebius ('Ecc. Hist.,' iii. 2) says, "*Linus* was ordained the first Bishop of Rome (*πρώτος κληρούται τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν*) after the martyrdom of Paul and Peter" (see, too, § 4 of the same book). Some identify him with a certain *Llin* in Welsh hagiography, said to be the son of *Caractacus*. As regards *Pudens* and *Claudia*, nothing is known about them unless the very ingenious and interesting theory of Archdeacon Williams is true, which is necessarily very uncertain. According to this theory, *Claudia* is the foreign lady, a Briton, whose marriage with *Pudens* is spoken of by *Martial* in two epigrams, and who also bore the cognomen of *Rufina*. It is supposed that she was the daughter of the British king *Cogidubnus*, the ally of the Romans and of the Roman governor, *Aulus Plautius*, whose wife *Pomponia* is said by *Tacitus* to have been impeached of the crime of embracing a "foreign superstition," which was probably Christianity. *Cogidubnus* appears by an ancient inscription now at Goodwood to have taken the name of the Emperor *Claudius*, being called *Tiberius Claudius Cogidubnus*, which would naturally lead to his daughter being called *Claudia*. And if further she was adopted by the wife of her father's ally, the name *Rufina* would be accounted for, as a distinguished branch of the gens *Pomponia* bore the name of *Rufus*. And *Martial's* epigram is addressed to "*Rufus*," as one interested in the marriage.

Claudia may either have learnt Christianity from *Pomponia*, or may have conveyed the knowledge of the gospel to her. On the other hand, the name of *Pudens* appears on the Goodwood inscription as having given, while still a heathen, a site for a temple of *Neptune* and *Minerva*, which was built "pro salute" of the imperial family under the authority of King *Cogidubnus*—curiously connecting him with the British king. It is probable that *Pudens* and *Claudia* were not yet married. Thus it will be seen that, while this theory is borne out by many coincidences, it cannot by any means be adopted as certain (see *Dean Alford's excursus* in the 'Proleg. to 2 Tim. ;' and *Conybeare and Howson's 'Life of St. Paul,'* vol. ii. p. 501). *Lewin* ('Life and Epist. of St. Paul,' vol. ii. p. 392) warmly espouses the theory, but hesitates between *Caractacus* and *Cogidubnus* as the father of *Claudia*. *Farrar* rejects the whole theory "as an elaborate rope of sand" ('Life of St. Paul,' vol. ii. p. 569). If *Linus* was the son, and *Claudia* the daughter, of *Caractacus*, they would be brother and sister.

Ver. 22.—*The Lord for the Lord Jesus Christ*, A.V. and T.R. The Lord be with thy spirit, etc. The manuscripts vary. The salutation as it stands in the R.T. is like the verses, "The Lord be with you. A. And with thy spirit." It is a peculiarity of the salutation here that it is double—one to Timothy personally, *μετὰ τοῦ πνεύματός σου*; the other to the Church, *ἡ χάρις μετ' ὑμῶν*. 1 Cor. xvi. 24 exhibits another variety. *Grace* (see 1 Tim. vi. 21, note). The R.T. omits the "amen" at the end, as in 1 Tim. vi. 21. Thus closes our last authentic account of this great apostle; these are, perhaps, the last words of him who wrought a greater change in the condition of mankind by his speech than any man that ever lived. All honour be to his blessed memory!

HOMILETICS.

Vers. 1—8.—*The last charge*. The words of this chapter have the peculiar interest which attaches to the last words of one who was prominent above his fellow-men, and they have this striking character, that the apostle, knowing that the time of his departure was at hand, when the great work of his life must cease as far as he was concerned, was intensely solicitous that the work should go on after his death with uninterrupted course and with undiminished force. It is one of the features of the holy selfishness of St. Paul's character that he was not anxious for the success of the gospel only as far as that success was connected with his own labours, and was the fruit of his own apostolic energy; but that the growth of Christ's kingdom, and the increase of Christ's Church, and the salvation of souls, were things that he intensely longed for for their own sake, and without the slightest reference to himself. Accordingly, in the words before us, he throws his whole soul into the task of urging Timothy to carry on the work of the ministry with a vigour equal to his own. By the most solemn motives.

speaking as in the immediate presence of the great Judge of the quick and the dead, with the expectation of the great epiphany in full view, with all the glories of the mediatorial kingdom spread out before his mind's eye, he urges him to the work—the ministerial work; the evangelistic work; the work in which Paul had spent his strength, and ungrudgingly used his splendid faculties; the work which is described in three words, “Preach the Word.” For these words do really comprehend all the details which are added. Go as God's herald, and deliver to the people God's message—his message of abounding grace, his Word of pardon and forgiveness, his Word of love and reconciliation. Preach the Word which tells of Jesus Christ, of death to sin by his death upon the cross, of life to God by his resurrection from the dead. Preach the Word of holy obedience, of charity, and purity, and patience, and gentleness, and peace; the Word of like-mindedness with Christ, of conformity to the will of God; the Word of truth and righteousness; the unerring Word, which is like God, and cannot lie. Preach the Word as one who knows its worth and its power; as one who knows that the issues of life and death are bound up with it; as one who will brook no delay in preaching it. Preach it with special application to the varying needs of those who hear it. Reprove sin by its searching light. Rebuke offenders by its sharp two-edged blade. Exhort the weak and sluggish by its comforting and animating truths. Exemplify its excellence by the spirit in which you teach it. And be prepared for hardships and opposition and contradiction in your work. You may have to stand alone. You may see popular preachers all around you, leading astray silly souls by hundreds and thousands; tickling their ears with foolish fancies; ministering to their idle lusts; leading them away from the truth. But do thou “preach the Word.” Flinch not, shrink not, wince not. Do the work of an evangelist, faithfully, steadfastly, boldly. Fill my place; take up my work; witness for Christ as I have witnessed; suffer for Christ as I have suffered; and then join me in the kingdom of glory. Such is the tenor of the last apostolic charge. The Lord grant to his Church an unfailing succession of men to carry out its directions, and to fulfil it in its spirit and in its letter!

Vers. 9—22.—“*Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave unto her.*” In this little social incident of some three thousand years ago, which may have passed at the time with little observation, we have a pithy and pregnant example set before us, with the usual searching wisdom of Holy Scripture, of the difference between friendship and friendship, religion and religion, according as they lie deep in the roots of the heart or merely lie on the surface. The contrast between Demas and Luke affords another example of this important difference. We may believe that Demas had faith in Christ, and also that he had a measure of friendship for St. Paul. We need not suppose that, when he was a “fellow-worker” with St. Paul in the good work of evangelizing the world, when he was his companion with Luke and others during his first imprisonment at Rome, and travelled with him again Romewards, he was playing the hypocrite, and that he was either false in his profession of faith to the Lord Jesus or of attachment to his apostle. But neither his faith nor his friendship had been put to a severe test. The force of St. Paul's character had hitherto borne him along like an impetuous torrent. He had confidence in his star; he felt sure, perhaps, that the cause which Paul espoused would triumph; and no difficulties had arisen sufficient to make him waver in his purpose. But suddenly all was changed. This second imprisonment, with its ominous trial, with the defection of the Asiatic Christians, and the desertion of friends, had altered the whole aspect of affairs. Instead of the triumphs of the faith and the supremacy of the great apostle, he saw the probability of a cruel death for St. Paul and his nearest companions. The trial was too great for his weak faith and his superficial friendship. Without denying Christ, and without withdrawing from his outward attachment to St. Paul, we can fancy him, perhaps, with protestations of undiminished love, and regrets at the necessity which called him away, hurrying off to Thessalonica, his native place. But Paul felt it to be, what it was, a desertion. “Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave unto her.” In the words, “Only Luke is with me,” we see the different stamp both of his faith and of his friendship. Luke the physician was as loving as he was loved. With admirable fidelity and unshaken constancy, he had followed his great master from Philippi to Troas, and from

Troas to Jerusalem. In the graphic narratives of St. Paul's trials before the Sanhedrim, before Felix, before Festus and Agrippa; in his account of the shipwreck and of the arrival at Rome,—we trace his presence at all those eventful scenes. Through the two whole years of imprisonment he had never left him. And now that the end of that great career was drawing nigh, and the clouds were gathering up and darkening the evening of that glorious life, and various sorrows were thickening around that noble spirit, we read still, not in the inferences of Luke's modest narratives, but in the testimony of St. Paul himself, "Only Luke is with me." "Ruth clave unto her." "Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. . . . The Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part me and thee." We see, too, how he who had recorded in such graphic words "all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up," had imbibed the spirit of his Divine Master. He had not taught others to know Jesus Christ, without coming to the knowledge of him himself. And so his faith was firm in that day of shaking. He was ready to lose his life that he might gain it; and he stands before us, not only as the evangelist who teaches and delights us, but as the strong believer and the faithful friend, whose example is as persuasive as his words.

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Vers. 1, 2.—*A solemn charge to Timothy to make full proof of his ministry.* The prospect of his approaching death led the apostle to address his young disciple with deep and earnest feeling.

I. THE SOLEMN ADJURATION. "I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the quick and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom." The object of the apostle is to impart to Timothy a solemn sense of responsibility in the discharge of his ministry. 1. *All preachers must one day give an account of their stewardship.* Such a thought ought to stimulate them to greater faithfulness. 2. *Their responsibility is to God and Jesus Christ,* who are Witnesses of their work, as they have made them good ministers of the New Testament. 3. *Jesus Christ is the Judge of the two classes of living and dead saints,* who in the last day shall appear before his judgment-seat. All judgment is committed to him, and he will exercise it righteously. 4. *The judgment will take place at "his appearing and his kingdom;"* that is, at his second coming. 5. *The reward of fidelity is also held out to faithful servants in connection with the glory of "his kingdom."*

II. THE DUTIES OF THE FAITHFUL MINISTER. "Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and teaching." 1. *His first and pre-eminent duty is to preach the gospel,* because it is the power of God to salvation. There is no injunction to administer the sacraments, though that would be included in his duties. There is nothing, therefore, to justify the higher place which Tractarians assign to the sacraments beside the Word. It is a significant fact that the success of the apostles, as recorded in the Acts, is never once attributed to the sacraments, but always to the Word. 2. *The minister must have an earnest urgency in every part of his work.* He must create opportunities where he cannot find them; he must work at times both convenient and inconvenient to himself; he must approach the willing opportunely and the unwilling inopportunely. 3. *He must reprove, or convince, those in error as to doctrine.* 4. *He must rebuke the unruly, or immoral in life.* 5. *He must "exhort with all long-suffering and teaching"*—exercising due patience, and using all the resources of a sanctified understanding, to encourage men to keep to the ways of good doctrine and holiness.—T. C.

Vers. 3, 4.—*The waywardness and restiveness of so-called Christians a fresh incentive to fidelity in ministers.* This is an argument from the future to tell upon present duty.

I. THE REASON OF THE APOSTASY. "For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine." 1. *The gospel-doctrine is sound, because it necessitates a holy life, and holds the gratification of sinful passions to be inconsistent with the hopes of salvation.* 2. *Evil men cannot endure it,* because it is so opposed to the corruption of human nature, and therefore treat it with neglect, if not with contempt. 3. *The*

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apostle foresees the growth of evil in the Church, and therefore seeks to prepare ministers to war against it.

II. THE EFFECT OF THIS MORAL DISGUST AT THE GOSPEL. "But, having itching ears, will hearken to themselves teachers after their own lusts." 1. *They will not discard the ministry absolutely.* They will only exchange one class of ministers for another. But they will vastly multiply the number of their religious guides. 2. *The itch for novelty led to the multiplication of teachers.* They were fickle, unsettled, and uneasy. They wanted to hear new things or smooth things, such as would reflect the caprices of a corrupt nature. 3. *The reason for the whole rabble of teachers that they gathered to themselves* is to be found in their wish to have their fancies gratified—"after their own lusts." They wanted indulgent guides, who would flatter the pride of human nature, and not lay too great a stress upon the importance of a holy life. The sound doctrine was necessarily allied to a pure morality.

III. THE RETRIBUTION THAT AWAITS ON SUCH A PERVERSION OF JUDGMENT. "And will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables." 1. *It is a solemn fact in Divine providence, that when men do not like to return to the knowledge of the truth,* God gives them up to a reprobate mind, so that they lose all relish for sound doctrine. 2. *It is an equally solemn fact that, if the truth is repudiated, the heart will not therefore cease to exercise itself about religious concerns.* The heart cannot long remain empty. Fables rush in to occupy the place which denies a footing to truth, just as infidelity has a vacuum-creating power, which superstition immediately rushes in to fill up. What a waste of soul!—profitless fables taken in exchange for soul-saving truth!—T. C.

VER. 5.—*The duty of Timothy in trying times.* I. "BUT BE THOU SOBER IN ALL THINGS" 1. *The presence of false teachers necessitated a wakeful attitude, a constant presence of mind, a quick discernment of opportunities for advancing the truth.* 2. *There ought to be a consistently sober and watchful care extending through the whole life of the minister, who has to "give account of souls."*

II. "SUFFER HARDSHIP." 1. *If the minister fears the anger of men, he will not be faithful to God.* 2. *There is a reward for brave suffering.* (1 Tim. ii. 3—12.) 3. *The example of the apostle's life was ever before Timothy as a powerful incentive to endurance.* (1 Tim. iii. 10—12.)

III. "DO THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST." 1. *There was a separate class of officers called evangelists in the apostolic Church* (Eph. iv. 11), whose special business was to break new ground in the open fields of heathenism or the narrower confines of Judaism. They preached the gospel, while pastors shepherded the flocks. But we are not to suppose that pastors did not also "do the work of an evangelist." They had saints and sinners under their care in all places. 2. *As Timothy had been lately occupied in organizing the Church-life of Ephesus, the admonition was not needless that he should henceforth devote himself to the direct work of evangelization, as the best antidote to heresy and impiety.*

IV. "MAKE FULL PROOF OF THY MINISTRY." This was to be done: 1. *By constant labours.* 2. *By unswerving faithfulness to God and man.* 3. *By efforts to save sinners and edify saints, which were seen to be successful.* Such a man fulfils his ministry, for he seeks not his own things, but the things of Christ.—T. C.

VER. 6—8.—*The nearness of the apostle's death, and his prospects in connection with it.* He urges Timothy to increased zeal on account of his own approaching departure.

I. THE IMMINENCE OF HIS DEATH. "For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." 1. *Mark the calmness with which the apostle contemplates a violent death.* There is no tremor, or hurry, or impatience in his last days. The language is singularly composed. He knew that Nero would soon put an end to his life, for that monster of cruelty and crime was even then striking out wildly against the Christians. Nothing but an assured hope and a living faith could maintain the spirit in such trying circumstances. 2. *The apostle is not too preoccupied with his own approaching sufferings to forget the cause for which he is now about to surrender his life.* He is now more urgent than ever in his instructions to Timothy.

II. THE HAPPY RETROSPECT OF A USEFUL LIFE. "I have fought the good fight,

I have finished the course, I have kept the faith." 1. *The good fight ended.* (1) Every Christian is a soldier. (2) He has to fight against the threefold enmity of the world, the flesh, and the devil. (3) He overcomes through faith as his sole weapon (1 John v. 4, 5). (4) There is a limit to the duration of the fight. Death ends it. 2. *The race ended.* (1) It is a long race; (2) a wearying race; (3) yet a glorious race, because it has a happy ending. 3. *The faith preserved.* (1) It is a precious deposit placed in our hands (ch. i. 14). (2) Errorists of all sorts are continually striving to wrest it out of our hands by their specious sophistries. (3) Believers keep it safest who treasure it in their hearts as well as their minds.

III. THE BLESSED PROSPECTS IN STORE FOR HIM. "Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give to me at that day: and not only to me, but also to all them that have loved his appearing."

1. *The reward.* "The crown of righteousness." (1) It was the symbol of excellence and glory. (2) It was a recognition of the righteousness of the wearer. It was not a crown of ambition. It was not won by inflicting miseries on the human race. 2. *The certainty and manner of its bestowal.* (1) It is laid up in reserve securely for its wearers. (2) It is conferred (a) as matter of grace, for the Judge "awards" it of grace; and (b) as matter of righteousness, for, as righteous Judge, he will not allow the works of believers to go unrewarded (Rev. xiv. 13). 3. *The character of those receiving the reward.* "Them that have loved his appearing." (1) *Believers do not dread Christ's appearance in judgment.* (2) *They look forward with hope, satisfaction, and joy, to the day of final account.* (3) *All who love him now will love him at his appearing, when they shall see him in his glory.* (4) *The day of reward; the day of judgment.*—T. C.

Vers. 9—12.—*The apostle's loneliness and need of assistance and comfort.* The longing for sympathy and help in his hour of trial was natural. "Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me." There were several reasons for his desire to see Timothy, apart from the natural anxiety to see the most attached of his faithful disciples.

I. THE APOSTLE HAD BEEN DESERTED BY DEMAS. "Demas hath forsaken me."

1. *This brought great distress to the apostle:* (1) Because Demas had been a fellow-labourer and friend (Col. iv. 14). (2) Because he forsook him at a critical time in his personal history, when he was already disheartened by the Asiatic deserters and in the near prospect of death. (3) Because there was a special need for such as Demas to stand by the gospel in the city which was the heart of paganism, and to show courage and constancy in persecution. 2. *The cause of the desertion was more distressing.* "Having loved this present world." It may have been love of life or love of ease, or the desire to get back to old associations at Thessalonica (probably his native place), or the desire for pleasure or wealth. But it was a fatal passion. The love of this world is inconsistent with the true life, for all that is in the world is evil—"the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." It is all, in the present order of things, opposed to God and destructive to man. Nothing but Christ can deliver us from the power of this present evil world (Gal. i. 4).

II. THE APOSTLE WAS NOW ALMOST ALONE. Other fellow-labourers had gone on their errands of usefulness to various quarters—no doubt with his heart's consent: Crescens to Galatia; Titus to Dalmatia, on the Adriatic; Tychicus, an old friend, and once before sent to Ephesus, goes back there by the apostle's directions. Luke alone of all the ministers of Christ keeps the aged apostle company; for though such brethren as Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, and Claudia now dutifully attend upon him, yet the apostle is anxious to see Timothy, and begs that Mark may accompany him, for "he is useful to me for ministering," both in evangelistic and in personal service. —T. C.

Ver. 13.—*The apostle's directions concerning his cloke.* It has been considered beneath the dignity of inspiration that there should be such a trivial record. But the criticism is singularly superficial.

I. THE APOSTLE'S DIRECTIONS. "The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, bring when thou comest, and the books, especially the parchments." 1. *There is no evidence that the cloke was an ecclesiastical vestment;* for there is no evidence of vestments being

worn at all in the primitive Church. It was a thick cloke or mantle which the apostle needed in view of the approaching winter. His death might be near at hand, but, as its day was uncertain, it was natural he should provide against the winter cold. 2. *It was a precious consignment that was left with Carpus, the Christian disciple, at Troas.* It included, besides his cloke, books and parchments. (1) Even an apostle could not do without books for his ministry. (2) The parchments were more valuable than the books, containing, as they did probably, some of his own writings, if not the Holy Scriptures.

II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE APOSTLE'S DIRECTIONS. 1. *The request concerning his cloke implied that he was a poor man, as well as exposed to hardship and cold.* 2. *It suggests that he was partially deserted by the Roman Christians.* Why could they not give him or lend him a cloke? What had become of the Roman Christians who met him, so many years before, fifty miles from the city, and gave him such a hearty welcome? 3. *It proves his personal independence.* He will not ask a cloke from any one.—T. C.

Vers. 14, 15.—*The warning against Alexander the coppersmith.* I. THE CHARACTER OF THIS MAN. "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil . . . for he greatly withstood our words." This implies that he had been at Rome, and was still an enemy to the gospel (1 Tim. i. 20), as in the day when the apostle delivered him and Hymenæus over to Satan at Ephesus. Probably trade-interests may have inspired the fierceness of his hatred to the apostle, for he may have been an idol-maker. He was insulting and spiteful and obstinate in his gainsaying.

II. THE RETRIBUTION THAT WOULD OVERTAKE HIM. "The Lord will render to him according to his works." 1. *This is to state a fact in Divine providence, quite irrespective of the apostle's wishes or feelings.* 2. *Transgressors against the cause of God have to reckon in the last resort, not with humble apostles, but with God himself.*

III. WARNING AGAINST HIS WAYS. "Of whom be thou ware also." He was a heretic and a blasphemer, and as such had been delivered to Satan, and was still perversely opposed to the truth. Timothy was warned to be watchful against his devices. It was no personal injury, but resistance to the gospel, that dictated this counsel.—T. C.

Vers. 16—18.—*The apostle's trial before Nero, with its memorable incidents.* I. HIS DESERTION BY MAN. "At my first defence no one took my part, but all forsook me; may it not be laid to their account." 1. *The apostle had to make his defence before the emperor.* There is no record of the nature of the charge. It was probably a charge of sedition or disobedience to the pagan authorities, which, on account of the close complication of civil and religious duties in the state, could not be explained to the satisfaction of a ruler jealous of civil obedience. 2. *The saints at Rome deserted the apostle through fear.* They failed to support him either by their presence, their sympathy, or their witness in his favour. Their weakness and timidity must have been a sore trial to the apostle. Yet he could remember that his Divine Master had been similarly deserted in his last hours. 3. *The apostle's prayer for these timorous saints.* "May it not be laid to their account." This implies: (1) That they had been guilty of a grave trespass in forsaking the apostle. (2) That a single sin, unpardoned, would be destructive to the saints. (3) That the apostle had a deep interest in their welfare. (a) He would be concerned for the great weakness of their faith, with its accompanying depression and discomfort; (b) for the effects of their weakness on the high repute of the gospel; (c) and he would seek their restoration in the very spirit of his Divine Master.

II. IF MAN FORSOOK HIM, HE WAS NOT FORSAKEN BY GOD. "But the Lord stood by me, and strengthened me; that through me the message might be fully proclaimed, and that all the Gentiles might hear." Like his Divine Master, he might say, "Yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me." 1. *The Divine support accorded to him.* The secret but gracious presence of the Lord delivered him from all unworthy fears of man. He would feel, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" He was strengthened inwardly unto all long-suffering with joyfulness; so that he could make his defence with all clearness and courage, with all presence of mind, and with all

freedom of thought and expression. 2. *The end of this Divine support was that the gospel might be still more fully known at Rome and elsewhere by all Gentiles.*

III. THE EFFECT OF HIS DEFENCE. "And I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." He had, for a time, escaped condemnation. Nero was the cruel lion out of whose power the Lord had delivered him.

IV. THE APOSTLE'S ANTICIPATION OF A STILL HIGHER DELIVERANCE. "And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom." 1. *This is no declaration that the apostle shall escape death, for he had already spoken of himself as "already being offered."* (Ver. 6.) 2. *It is a declaration that he shall be carried beyond the sphere of evil in every form, and translated securely into the heavenly kingdom.* All the evil influences at work around him would not affect him. There is not a note of fear in his last days.

V. ASCRIPTION OF GLORY TO HIS DIVINE DELIVERER. "To whom be the glory for ever and ever." 1. *The glory is here ascribed to the Son of God, an express evidence of his Divinity.* 2. *There is no time more appropriate for such an ascription of glory as after deliverance from death and evil.*—T. C.

Vers. 19—22.—*Salutations and personal notices.* I. SALUTATIONS. "Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the house of Onesiphorus." 1. *The apostle remembers his absent friends in his solitude,* but especially those who gave him such hearty co-operation at Corinth or Ephesus. 2. *He likewise transmits to Timothy the Christian salutations of Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, and Claudia, Roman saints, of eminence and grace in the Church,* yet who failed to stand by him on his memorable trial.

II. NOTICES. "Erastus abode at Corinth." Probably the chamberlain of that city (Rom. xvi. 22), who once showed much kindness to the apostle, and afterwards accompanied Timothy on a journey into Macedonia (Acts xix. 22). "Trophimus I left at Miletus sick." This was a Gentile Christian of Ephesus, whose presence with the apostle at Jerusalem caused such an uproar (Acts xxi. 29). Miletus was a seaport of Caria, thirty miles from Ephesus. Trophimus would have been with the apostle at Rome, probably, but for his sickness. The apostle left him at Miletus, probably, shortly before his present imprisonment.

III. FINAL WORDS FOR TIMOTHY. "Do thy diligence to come before winter." We see here the tender anxiety of the apostle to see his young friend before death. If he did not come at once, the severities of the winter might prevent his journey altogether. "The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you." We have here a double benediction—one addressed singly to Timothy, the other to Timothy and the Ephesian Church. The presence of Christ would be his comfort and stay in every difficulty, and strengthen him for every duty.—T. C.

Ver. 2.—*The apostolic injunction.* "Preach the Word." Timothy had not to *create* a gospel, but to preach one; and the "Word" is broad and vast enough for any preacher. The cross has for its circumference all truth, and is to be carried into all spheres of life.

I. PREACH IT WITH INSTANCY. It is not a mere philosophy to interest students as an esoteric study; nor is it a mere elaborate theological thesis to be proven true. It has to do with "the present salvation" and the future well-being of man. Instancy: for: 1. The season may be only *now*. To-morrow preacher or hearer, or both, may be gone. 2. The truth can never be out of season. We need it always—in all places, in all our duties, temptations, and trials.

II. PREACH IT WITH AUTHORITY. That is, with the authority of truth, not your own *ex-cathedra* authority. "Meekly;" but not as though your congregations were patrons to be pleased; or Satanisms to try your opinions. Modestly; but with authority; not, as I said, your own authority, but the authority of truth, which has its own witness within. So you will reprove men fearlessly, never hiding them from themselves by cunning words of flattery. And you will "rebuke"—for evil soon spreads if it be not exposed and condemned at once—just as Nathan boldly faced David, and said, "Thou art the man."

III. PREACH IT WITH EXHORTATION. The teacher is not to be merely a scornful satirist of immorality—a sort of Juvenal. Nor is he to be a lightning-conductor of Divine wrath; he is to seek to save men. He has not done his work when he has

revealed the Law of God against evil. He is to remember that the Christ he preaches is the Son of man who is come, "not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." 1. *Long-suffering is to be the spirit of his method.* Remembering that humanity is frail and fallen, the preacher must be sympathetic, as himself needing mercy. 2. *Doctrine is to be his remedy.* The great revelation of a Divine Saviour and the promised Spirit, the Comforter.—W. M. S.

Ver. 6.—*Life's evening hour.* "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." St. Paul felt sure that the enemies of the gospel would be successful in their designs upon his life. Sooner or later he knew that the lions or the flames, the executioner's axe or the cruel cross, would complete his earthly course. But as he had made an "offering" of his life to Christ, so he was ready in death to be offered up for the Master's sake.

I. THE APOSTOLIC READINESS. Although a prisoner, he had been permitted to be a preacher in the neighbouring camp of Cæsar's palace during his *first* imprisonment at Rome. But not so now. Amid the Prætorian Guard alone could he testify now; and as the soldier to whom he was chained by the wrist would often be changed, he had the opportunity of speaking to each one in turn the good word of the kingdom of God. His imprisonments had been preceded by missionary journeys, in which he had planted Churches of Christ everywhere—Churches which had become centres of evangelization and edification. He was "ready;" for his character had been moulded by "great tribulation;" so that his soul was purified by the grace of God working there the self-conquests of his nature. The righteous indignation of a strong nature—which we know full well once in his apostolate would have been aroused at his adversaries—had been softened into a calm submission to the Divine will, and he was conscious that God would take care of his own Church in the perilous times which had come. Moreover, Timothy was there to take up the great work and to preach the Word. Paul was ready for the "rest;" and the "rest" was ready for him.

II. THE APOSTLE'S TIME. "The time of my departure." All our times are in God's hand: "the time to be born and the time to die." This was with Paul no fatalistic creed; he did not forget that there was a divinely wise will ordering all. 1. *Death was a departure.* It was not the habit of St. Paul to dwell on death in itself, but rather on its glorious issues to the Christian. The faith was strong in him. The motto—*Mors janua vitæ*—"Death is the gate of life," was the spirit of his creed. 2. *But death was not the departure of the Christ.* He was here. By his Spirit he was still working in the hearts of all who believed. The Christ in him was the Christ in Timothy too; and St. Paul well knew that the triumphant chariot of the Redeemer stops at no man's grave.—W. M. S.

Ver. 7.—*The battle finished.* "I have fought a good fight." Nothing in nature is more beautiful than the all-glorious sunset; even the storm-clouds make it a more magnificent scene. So it was with St. Paul. Amid the threatening clouds of persecution the Saviour's glory shone all around and about him, and lighted up the dark firmament of the martyr-experiences.

I. THE PAST FIGHT. He was a man of war in the best sense, and had fought a good fight. He had conflicts *in himself*—"fightings without, and fears within." He had opposition from the Jews of the ancient Church, and from the Judaistic Christians, who were trying to pervert the gospel! Rome, that dreaded sedition, looked upon him as a stirrer-up of strife, and though St. Paul was not an enemy of Cæsar, this gave Cæsar's enemies an opportunity for casting opprobrium on him. He had, too, as we all have, *invisible enemies*, so that he did not war only "against flesh and blood." The past fight was a lifelong one with him, for he had at first to withstand even his Christian coadjutors in his determination to proclaim and to preserve the universality and spirituality of the gospel kingdom; he boldly and triumphantly withstood even Peter to the face, and so gave to the Church of all ages the Magna Charta of its Divine freedom.

II. THE FINISHED COURSE. He could look back upon the racecourse now, and he varies his imagery. Now he introduces the idea of the Grecian games. We can see the eager athlete girding his loins for the race—a race which taxed all his energies. In heat and cold, amidst enemies and friends, St. Paul "pressed toward the mark." There

is no tone of finality, however, about his language in the strictest sense. The end was only a post which he had to pass, not a grave in which he had to sleep. For to him to live was Christ, and to die was gain.—W. M. S.

Ver. 8.—*The great reward.* "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." This is the key-note. Many successful Roman generals and some of the philosophers of the old world committed suicide in weariness and disgust of life. To live was *ennui*, and worse; for all was "vanity and vexation of spirit."

I. THE FUTURE IS PROVIDED FOR. "Henceforth [or, 'as to the rest'] there is laid up for me." Christ will not let any one of his faithful servants go uncrowned; all receive the prize—only their crown will be the perfecting of character, as the flower blossoms in its summer beauty. Heaven is the everlasting summer of the saints; and there "the crown of righteousness," which never was fully attained upon earth, will be given to all those who endure unto the end. Sometimes it is called "the crown of glory," sometimes "the crown of righteousness," and sometimes "the crown of life;" for the crowns of God are not the tinsel of earth's corruptible gold, but crowns of conscience, mind, and character—in one word, crowns of *life*.

II. THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGE WILL BE THERE. He before whom all hearts are open, he whose judgment is according to knowledge, and who understands all the unknown and unnoticed conflicts of every earnest soul. He is the righteous Judge. Human judgment at its best cannot be perfectly righteous—it may approach to it, but "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" None, indeed, but himself and God.

III. THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH WILL SHARE IN THE CORONATION. "And not to me only, but unto *all them also that love his appearing*." Some men dread that appearing. They never have liked thoughts of God, and how shall they like the presence of God? Those who have lived in pleasure, and said to God, "Depart from us!" may well tremble at his appearing. But the true Christian, who has walked by faith, loves Christ's appearing. 1. We long to see equity or righteous judgment triumphant in the universe. So much judgment seems to miscarry now. 2. We long to see the Saviour, whom not having seen, we love; for at his appearing "we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." St. Paul was no rhapsodist, but he desired to depart and be *with Christ*, which was far better.—W. M. S.

Ver. 21.—*Timothy's presence desired.* "Do thy diligence to come before winter." Travelling would be difficult then, if not impossible, and perhaps the white snow would be the shroud of the apostle. Anyway, he has been delivered once for a brief space out of the mouth of that lion—Nero. But it is not easy to believe that this ferocious lion, satiated for the time with blood, should seek to devour him no more. But a Roman prison in winter is a very desolate place, and he who has been hurried from place to place by his keepers has left even his warm cloke behind him, and hopes to cover himself with that black goat's-hair skin when winter comes. Bring the cloke, Timothy, and the papyrus books—old vellum manuscripts, perhaps the roll of Isaiah and the prophets; let not Timothy forget *them*, for there are songs of prisoners in those inspired prophetic rolls. And let Timothy remember that St. Paul wants to see his face again.

I. HERE IS ABSENCE OF MURMURING. We may and ought to learn what the gospel can achieve. Here is Paul prevented from preaching, with arrest laid on all his missionary work. In a dreary Roman dungeon he is "persecuted, but not forsaken;" "struck down, but not destroyed." Yet mark this—he never suffered one murmuring word to pass his lips.

II. HERE IS PRESENCE OF GREETING. He would cheer Timothy, and sends him various greetings, from the Roman saints, as we may see by their names—Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren—send greeting! What sublime self-abnegation there was in St. Paul! Forgetful always of himself! How like the Master! In the hour of expected dissolution he is thinking only of others.—W. M. S.

Vers. 1—8.—Solemn charge to Timothy. I. CHARGED TO BE FAITHFUL IN THE PERFORMANCE OF HIS OFFICIAL DUTIES. 1. *Witnessing the charge.* (1) *Christ associated*

with God. "I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Jesus Christ." Unseen by Timothy, they were really present as Witnesses of the charge now to be laid on him. The first Witness, who is the First Person of the Godhead, is simply designated *God*. It is the highest, most comprehensive, of names. With God is associated the historical Jesus with the Divine commission. While the apostle is very careful to place himself and other ministers at a distance from Christ (1 Cor. iii.), he does not hesitate to bring him into the closest association with God. The spirits of the departed cannot communicate with us; but Jesus, who died thirty-eight years before the writing of this Epistle, is thought of as present with Paul in his dungeon, witnessing to the charge in all its particulars that is to be sent on to Timothy. (2) *Christ at the time of greatest solemnity for Timothy*. "Who shall judge the quick and the dead." Timothy is not mentioned; but, as the quick and the dead are all-inclusive, he was to regard himself as included. The time was to come when Christ was to return to earth. Before his judgment-seat were to be gathered the quick (suddenly changed) and the dead (raised from their graves). Timothy (changed or awakened) would have to take his place along with others, to give an account to the Judge especially of his official work. (3) *Christ at the time of greatest joy to his people*. "And by his appearing and his kingdom." Christ is now concealed from human view, and men may dispute his being the Son of God, may dispute the fact that he died. At his appearing, his relation to the Father and to human salvation will be made clear beyond all possibility of doubt. Christ is now reigning, but there is not a full acknowledgment of his power. Many never think of his reigning at all. The time is to come when his kingdom is to be established as it is not established now—established in the full acknowledgment of his power—established to know neither modification nor end. On his return to heaven he is to come into a certain subordination to the Father, and yet is the order of things that is to last through eternity called his kingdom. To his people the time of his appearing, and from which his kingdom dates, will be full of joy as the time when their Master shall be publicly honoured, and when their own sharing with him shall stand out in its full meaning. Timothy must not, by unfaithfulness, take from the joy of the future disclosure of Christ to him. 2. *Particulars of the charge*. These are given in rapid succession, without connecting words, by which there is gain in force. (1) *Duty of preaching*. "Preach the Word." The Word, *i.e.* of God, was what he was to preach; but the stress is more on the preaching. That was his work; let him preach, preach; let him utter Divine truth; let him utter it loudly as a herald, so that men may hear. (2) *Season for preaching*. "Be instant in season, out of season." He was to be ready for every opportunity of preaching. He was to have his *stated* season for preaching, so that men might know when they could hear the Word; but he was also to preach beyond the stated season. His season was to be every season, *i.e.* within natural and moral limits. He was to preach, strength permitting, whenever an opportunity of doing good thereby was presented to him. (3) *Parts of preaching*. "Reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and teaching." He was to reprove, *i.e.* to expose the real nature of sin. He was to rebuke, *i.e.* to impute blame for sin. He was to exhort, *i.e.* to use persuasion against continuing in sin, and toward leading a better life. He was to execute the three offices of a reprover, rebuker, exhorter, with all long-suffering—not vehemently, but, as with all proper restraint on himself, so with all proper consideration for others; and with all teaching—not unintelligently, but with repeated instruction, and not out of his own thoughts, but out of the Word.

II. ARGUMENT DRAWN FROM A DISTURBED FUTURE. 1. *The intolerableness of sound doctrine*. "For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine." The sound or healthful teaching, according to 1 Tim. iii. 16, is that which, founded on the facts of redemption, leads to godliness. Men find it intolerable, because it binds them down to thoughts and courses which are contrary to "their own lusts." 2. *The teachers that spring up for those who find sound doctrine intolerable*. "But, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts." Their relief is not to get rid of all teachers (which would be too drastic), but to get teachers after their own lusts. These teachers are the birth and reflection of their own depraved sentiments. Those who strive to have their desires regulated by the Word of God are satisfied with the gospel teachers; those who have their desires unregulated (*i.e.* in the state of *lusts*) are not easily satisfied. "Having itching ears, they heap to themselves

teachers." They have a constant uneasy feeling which seeks to be gratified with new teachers, both many and indiscriminate. 3. *The abandonment of those who have itching ears to myths.* "And will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables." Their duty is to turn their ears to the truth, but, as they have itching ears, they turn aside to listen to fables—not truth, but inventions. When men do not find the truth agreeable to the ear, they may take the wildest fancies, the most childish beliefs. There were anticipations of these myths of the future with which Timothy had to do.

III. CHARGE RESUMED. 1. *Sobriety.* "But be thou sober in all things." Those who had to do with myths had not clearness and caution of mind, but were intoxicated with their own wisdom. Timothy was to avoid their fault. There is a sobriety which is germane to the truth. It does not flatter a man, but keeps him to the humility of fact. It may deeply move him, but does not take away his clearness and caution. It does not, like many myths of the false teachers, morbidly excite the imagination, or leave room for morbid gratification, but acts as a principle of self-restraint. Timothy, in seeking to influence others, was to exercise all self-restraint in manner and matter of preaching and in personal dealing. 2. *Hardihood.* "Suffer hardship." This is not the first time that he has been thus exhorted. In ch. ii. 3 there was the added idea of association with Paul. The exhortation is reintroduced in this comprehensive charge, again and more impressively to remind him of hardships that he might expect in his future ministry. 3. *His evangelistic office.* "Do the work of an evangelist." There was need to remind Timothy of this, inasmuch as for the time he was settled in Ephesus. Paul had been very much of an evangelist, i.e. an itinerant preacher, himself. However important the establishing of congregations, he was not to overlook the importance of circulating the gospel, with a view to new congregations being formed. 4. *All the parts of his ministry to be attended to.* "Fulfil thy ministry." He has mentioned one part; in the concluding direction he includes all. *His ministry* was partly determined by his talents and circumstances. He was rightly to proportion between the various parts of his ministry, giving each the attention to which it was entitled, though one might be attended with greater hardship than another. He was to fill up the Divine measure in all, and to the end of his life.

IV. CONSIDERATION DRAWN FROM THE APOSTLE'S END. 1. *His end approaching.* *First mode of conceiving of his end.* "For I am already being offered." The force of the connection is that Timothy was to be faithful, because Paul was no longer to remain to carry on Christ's work. Upon him the mantle of his master was to fall. The language in which Paul describes his end is Jewish, and sacrificial, in its colouring. The conclusion of the sacrifice was the *libation*, or pouring out of the drink offering of wine around the altar. His service of Christ had been all of the nature of sacrifice. He "counted not his life dear unto himself." He was among those who, for Christ's sake, were killed all the day long, who were accounted as sheep for the slaughter. There was now only the concluding libation, viz. the pouring out of his blood as a martyr around Christ's altar. The concluding ceremony was already commenced, in what he was suffering in his dungeon. It had a painful significance, and a rich significance too; for it was as the pouring out of strong wine (Numb. xxviii. 7). *Second mode of conceiving of his end.* "And the time of my departure is come." The word translated "departure" has a common nautical application, viz. to the loosening of the cable that binds the vessel to land, that it may speed on to its destination. By his martyrdom the connection between Paul and earth was to be let loose, that he might speed, as with the quickness of lightning, to the haven where he was for ever to rest. The time of the loosening was all but come; there on the pier was the man appointed to let slip the fastenings. 2. *Feelings with which he regarded his approaching end.* (1) *Consciousness of faithfulness in view of the past.* *First mode of conceiving of his faithfulness.* "I have fought the good fight." The language is taken from the games. The fight is to be interpreted as the fight of faith. It is the good fight, being on behalf of Christ, on behalf of souls. He had the testimony of his conscience that he had "fought the good fight." By faithful preaching, by holy example, by fervent prayers, by patient sufferings, he had sought to advance Christ's cause, he had sought to save souls. Now the end of the conflict was come, little being left but its effects, these effects partly shown in his own wearied frame. *Second mode of con-*

ceiving of his faithfulness. "I have finished the course." The language is taken specially from the racecourse. At one point we find him nobly anxious to finish his course (Acts xx. 24). At another point we find him conscious of the space that lay between him and the goal (Phil. iii.). Here he is conscious of his standing at the goal. He had finished his course, not in the sense of having done with it, but in the sense of having done what properly belonged to it. He had followed on (after the Master), without stopping, without abating zeal, till he now had come up to the goal. *Third mode of conceiving of his faithfulness.* "I have kept the faith." He had been specially entrusted with the talent of the Catholic faith. It had been his, to let it be known that Christ was the Friend of man, that as Incarnate God he had made infinite satisfaction for sin, that he was longing to embrace all in his saving love. Amid all temptations to lose it, to substitute something else for it, he had kept it inviolate. He had not allowed the truth to suffer in his hands; nor must Timothy allow it to suffer in his hands now that more depended on him. (2) *Full assurance of hope in view of the future.* (a) *Present laying up.* "Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness." There is the idea of laying up, as for future use or enjoyment. What was laid up was the crown of righteousness, i.e. the reward of him who conquers, and of him who rightfully conquers. In the Christian view this is he who does the work which is appointed for him by Christ. From that time forth the crown of righteousness was laid up for him. To such a height the assurance of the apostle rose. There was no self-exalting element in his assurance, as though he had been working in his own strength, or as though he had the deciding of what, comparatively, his reward was to be. But that, from his experience of assisting grace in the doing of his work, he was among those who were to be crowned, he had no more doubt than he had of his own existence. (b) *Future bestowal.* "Which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give to me at that day." The Rewarder is the Lord—whose prerogative is indisputable. He is to reward at that day—the day of the future by pre-eminence. He is then to act as the righteous Judge—whose judgments are all to be founded on righteousness. From his reserved treasures he is to bring forth the crown due to faithful service, and place it on his head. (c) *General occasion.* "And not only to me, but also to all them that have loved his appearing." He expressly excludes the thought of his being exceptionally crowned. His being crowned would not prevent others, such as Timothy, from being crowned. All would be crowned who continued to love Christ's appearing. This event is to be affectionately regarded, because it is the time when his loveliness is to be fully displayed, when also his love for his people is to be fully displayed. It is an event which is fitted to purify and elevate our spiritual life. Let it be the test by which we try our being included in the number of the faithful. Does it occupy our thoughts? does it inflame our affections?—R. F.

Vers. 9—22.—*Personal.* I. TIMOTHY. 1. *Requested to come to Rome.* "Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me." His formerly expressed longing to see him (ch. i. 4) is now turned into a formal request to come, and to come shortly, unto him. In the diligence he was to show in this there is not the idea of pure haste, but of the utmost haste that was compatible with the interests of Christ at Ephesus. Certain arrangements would require to be made, not merely for his journey, but for the carrying on of the work after his departure. But as soon as these arrangements could be made he was to hasten to him at Rome. 2. *Special reason in Paul's isolation.* "For Demas forsook me, having loved this present world, and went to Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me." The fundamental reason for the request was the apostle's approaching martyrdom; but there was an additional and special reason in his isolation at Rome. This should not have been the case; for Demas, who had been his trusted assistant, had been there, and if he had done his duty would still have been with him. But he forsook him in his hour of distress, which may probably be associated with his *first defence* (ver. 16). The reason for desertion was that he loved the *present world*. We are not to understand *world* in the ethical sense in which it is sometimes used; the world as it has become by the entrance of sin, in opposition to the world as it was intended to be. He loved the good things of the world—absence from the scene of peril, ease in his own home—in preference to what would have advantaged him in the future world—bravely standing by Paul and

lovingly ministering to his sufferings. The conduct of Demas was dastardly and cruel, calculated to destroy his influence as a Christian teacher. We are not warranted in saying that it excluded after-penitence and wrecked his destiny. It has been his earthly destiny to be associated with a black act done to one of the noblest of men at a time when his nobility shone forth most clearly. In explanation of his isolation, Paul mentions without comment the departure of Crescens to Galatia, and of Titus to Dalmatia. In their case we may understand that there was not desertion of Paul, but pressure of Christian work and a mission from Paul. The only one of Paul's assistants who was with him was Luke, so often mentioned in connection with Paul. In connection with the mention of his name here, it is remarkable that he who was with Paul during his second imprisonment in Rome only brings down the apostolic history to the period of the first imprisonment there. With the exception of Luke there were no Christian workers with Paul who could enter intelligently and sympathetically into his plans and render assistance on the spot. 3. *Requested to take Mark, and bring him with him.* "Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is useful to me for ministering. But Tychicus I sent to Ephesus." After what had happened, the honourable mention of Mark in Col. iv. 10 and again here is honourable to Paul. His opinion of him had undergone great change. He had made a firm stand against him as an unsuitable companion in labour; now he bases his request for the presence of the evangelist at Rome on his being useful for ministering. Tychicus, who is warmly commended in Eph. vi. 21, had been thus useful; but he had been under the necessity of sending him on a mission to Ephesus. The ministering to be thought of was not so much to Paul the prisoner as to Paul in his imprisonment planning for the future of Christianity. These, then, we are to think of as the three workers who surrounded the apostle in Rome as he neared his martyrdom—Timothy, Mark, Luke. They were men of like spirit, to whom he could freely communicate his plans and also the enthusiasm necessary for carrying them out. All three had the *evangelistic* faculty. If Timothy had more of the *administrative* faculty, marking him out as, more than the other two, the *successor* of Paul, they had more of the *literary* faculty, marking them out for service to future generations. 4. *Requested to bring belongings of the apostle with him from Troas.* "The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, bring when thou comest, and the books, especially the parchments." The apostle had not lived to accumulate property; and none would be much the richer by what he left behind. He possessed a *cloke*, which some friend may have gifted to him—a large warm cloke for winter, when lately at Troas—since the previous winter, we may suppose—he had not been able to bring it with him, but had left it with Carpus. As Timothy would pass Troas on his way to Rome, he is requested to bring it with him. Paul did not, in the spirit of modern monasticism, court suffering; he provides against the coming winter, even when that winter was to bring his martyrdom. He also possessed *books*, which are a necessity for the preacher. He who has influenced so many by his books was himself influenced by the books of others. He also possessed *parchments*, on which he laid greater stress as his own compositions, containing records and statements of truth in which he was deeply interested, as fitted to keep the current of Christianity clear and pure. Timothy, who in the First Epistle is charged to attend to reading, would find in these books and parchments good pabulum and companionship on his journey from Troas to Rome.

II. ALEXANDER. 1. *His injurious conduct.* "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil." The fact of his being styled the coppersmith seems to point to his being distinguished from others of the same name. We would not, therefore, identify him with the Alexander of the First Epistle, or the Alexander of the Acts of the Apostles. We may conclude, from the language, that he bore personal animosity to Paul. 2. *The Righter in heaven.* "The Lord will render to him according to his works." This is very different from invoking a curse on Alexander. He found it in his heart to make matters much worse for Paul. The Lord would judge between them. This would issue in evil to Alexander, unless his present spiteful works were followed by repentance. 3. *No confidence to be placed in him.* "Of whom be thou ware also; for he greatly withstood our words." Paul had good reason to be on his guard against him. We can understand his having a certain connection with Christianity, which would give him all the more power to injure Paul. But he had not the spirit of

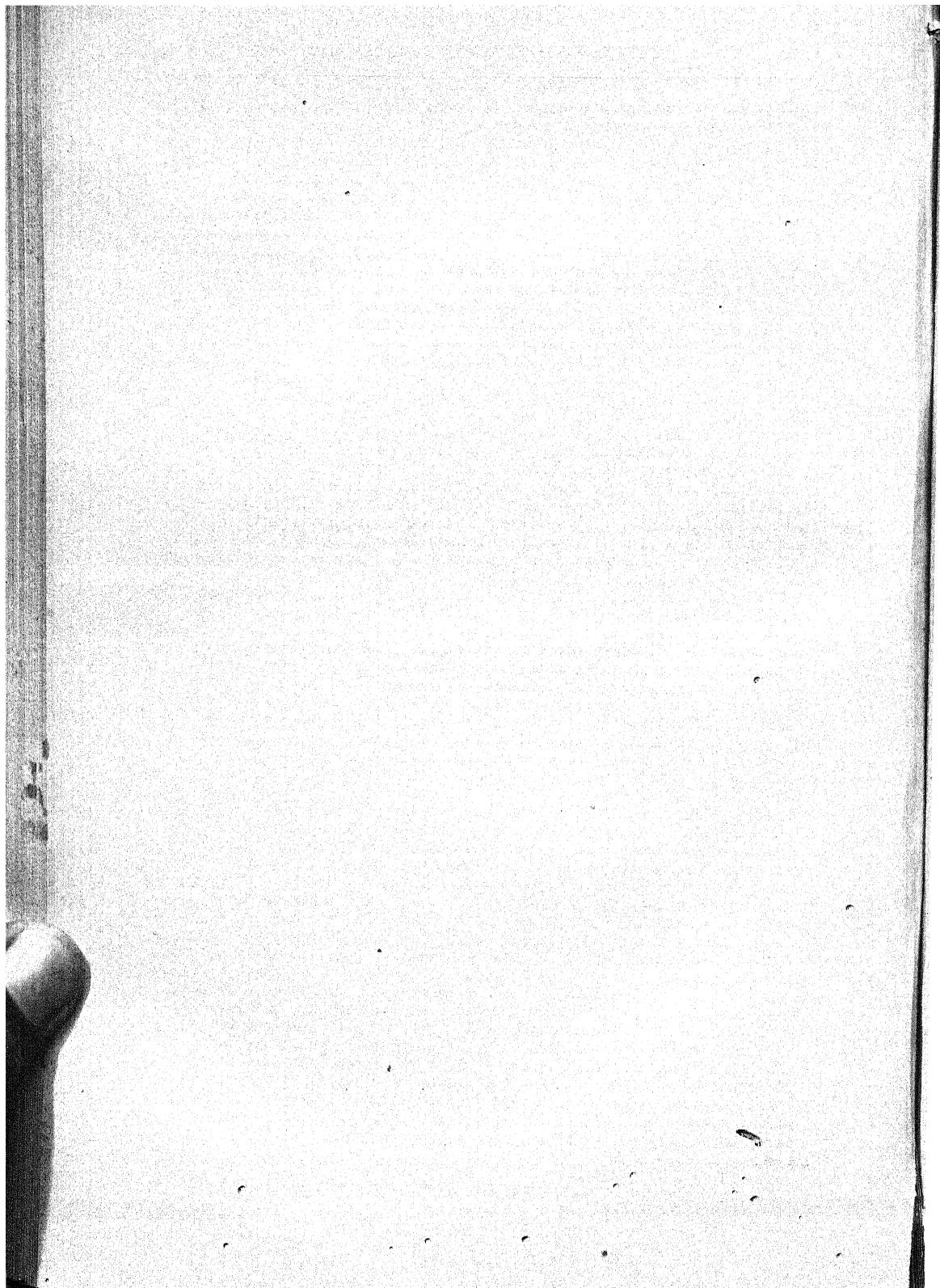
Christianity, when on the occasion, we may suppose, of the *first defence*, he made injurious statements against the great champion of Christianity. If he still professed to be a friend of Christianity at a distance from Rome, he was to be regarded with suspicion.

III. PAUL. 1. *First defence.* "At my first defence." This first defence was in connection with a second imprisonment, of which there can be no doubt. The account of Eusebius is that "after defending himself successfully, it is currently reported that the apostle again went forth to proclaim the gospel, and afterwards came to Rome a second time, and was martyred under Nero." Some would place an interval of five years between the first and second imprisonments. We have not the means of knowing the precise charge against which he had to defend himself on this second occasion. There is apparently this fact to go upon, that, after the conflagration of Rome which was attributed by Nero to the Christians, Paul as their leader was liable at any moment to be arrested. The supposition is adopted by some that on this ground he was arrested at Nicopolis, where Titus was to join him (Titus iii. 12), and taken across the Adriatic to Rome. His trial, which does not seem this time to have been long delayed, was yet recent; for Timothy had not been informed of it. The trial would probably take place, not before Nero, as on the previous occasion, but before the city prefect, who, as more the emperor's creation, was supplanting the regular judges. The scene of the trial would probably be in one of the basilicas in the Roman forum, where a large audience could be accommodated. "A dense ring," says Pliny, "many circles deep, surrounded the scene of trial. They crowded close to the judgment-seat itself, and even in the upper part of the basilica both men and women pressed close in the eager desire to see (which was easy) and to hear (which was difficult)." We may conclude, from the language here (first defence), and also from his being still in bonds as a malefactor (ch. ii. 9), that the trial resulted neither in his *condemnation* nor in his *full acquittal*. Some imagine that he was acquitted on a first charge; but that there was a second charge on which he was yet to be tried. The more probable supposition is that there was a *postponement* in consequence of the case not being clear, and that the apostle was looking forward to a second trial when, on the whole case, he would have to make a second defence. 2. *Assistance at his trial.* "No one took my part, but all forsook me: may it not be laid to their account. But the Lord stood by me, and strengthened me; that through me the message might be fully proclaimed, and that all the Gentiles might hear." He had not the assistance which was usually enjoyed by the accused on his trial. No stress need be laid on the absence of a professional advocate; for Paul was well able to defend himself. But there was no one beside him to give him countenance. There was no one—which would have rendered great assistance—to come forward and testify that his relation to the Roman law, in his conduct and teaching, had been all that Romans could have desired. It was his fortune to be put in the position in which his Master had been put before him. "All," he says, "forsook me." The resemblance extended not merely to his position, but to his gentleness of spirit. The Master had said on the cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." The servant echoes this sentiment when he says, "May it not be laid to their account." The absence of earthly friends was, however, more than made up by the presence of a heavenly Friend. This was the Lord Jesus Christ, who *stood by* him, not merely as his Friend, but as his Advocate, and strengthened him as such. That is to say, he supplied him, in matter and spirit, with all that was necessary for his defence. This was according to the Master's own promise, "And when they bring you before the synagogues, and the rulers, and the authorities, be not anxious how or what ye shall say: for the Holy Spirit shall teach you in that very hour what ye ought to say." We learn that the defence of himself was adroitly turned into a defence of the gospel. If there was a charge of *arson*, it would be open to him to show that the gospel did not encourage crime or resistance to the powers that be. It would also fall naturally to him to give a statement of the points on which he laid greatest stress in his teaching. The assistance he received was of the highest avail; for it brought his life-work to its culmination. He had been proclaiming the gospel in many places, and in many places the Gentiles had heard. Now, when his opportunity had come before Roman officials and before a Roman multitude, as apparently he had not come before, he could say that, as far as his instrumentality was concerned, his

proclamation had reached its climax, and the last of the Gentiles had heard. 3. *His description of the result of the trial.* "And I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." The ancient opinion, that the lion here was Nero, may be taken as substantially correct. We are not to understand that Paul had become personally obnoxious to Nero since his acquittal by him. Away from Rome, he may not have attracted the attention of the tyrant. But it suited Nero, according to the testimony of Tacitus, to avert the rage of the populace from himself to the Christians. As the result of that rage, Paul, as the ringleader of the Christians, was apprehended, and put on his trial. In the state of feeling which prevailed, it would be very difficult for Paul to get a calm hearing. He was more likely to meet with fierceness than with justice. The Roman power, of which Nero was the fit embodiment, was like a lion opening its mouth to devour him. That he was not instantly devoured was nothing less than a miracle. The Lord standing by him, he was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. We must not put more meaning into this than it will bear. It simply means that he got a respite. Roman fierceness was not then gratified; the lion did not get him then between its teeth. But Roman fierceness, consequent on the conflagration, had not died out; the lion might again open its mouth on him. 4. *Confident hope of future and everlasting deliverance.* "The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom." His respite gave him this confidence. It did not make him self-confident; but, mindful of the source whence his respite had come, his confidence was in the Lord, that he would deliver him still. It was not a deliverance from death that he expected, as appears from the second clause. But it was deliverance from all that would intimidate him or unfit him for bearing a worthy testimony on the occasion of his second trial. A wicked attempt might be made to damage Christianity in him, as may have been made by Alexander on the occasion of the first trial. The Lord would not allow that attempt to succeed. Christianity would come forth out of the trial untarnished. The issue, so far as he was concerned, would be his being placed safely in Christ's heavenly kingdom. This would be his receptacle after and through death. For Christ's kingdom is already commenced in heaven. The safe placing of Paul in it meant, on the one side, removal from the sphere of all evil, and, on the other side, the coming under the highest conditions of happiness in the enjoyment of Christ—barring what is associated with the completing of the number of the elect and the reunion of soul and body. 5. *Doxology.* "To whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen." Doxology is an accompaniment of the highest spiritual mood. It is offered here to the Son, as elsewhere to the Father. For it was the Lord's assistance that he had enjoyed, and still expected, and into whose kingdom in heaven he was, by the same assistance, to be safely brought. It would take the ages of ages to declare all that Christ had been and was still to be to him.

IV. SALUTATIONS. 1. *The distant to whom salutations are sent.* "Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the house of Onesiphorus." Prisca and Aquila were workers with Paul, who for his life had laid down their own necks. Prisca being mentioned before her husband would seem to point to her characteristics being more remarkable. The house of Onesiphorus is saluted, apparently for the reason that Onesiphorus himself was dead. *Appended notices.* "Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus I left at Miletus sick. Do thy diligence to come before winter." Erastus and Trophimus, who were associated with Ephesus, he did not salute, because they were not at the time there, as far as he knew. His feeling with regard to Timothy himself was to have his immediate fellowship. Let not winter come on and prevent his coming; for his martyrdom was imminent. 2. *The near who send their salutations.* "Eubulus saluteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren." The brethren in Rome all sent their salutations. They were numerous enough to be known as Christians by Nero. The members of the Roman Church whose names are given would be specially interested in Timothy.

V. BENEDICTION. "The Lord be with thy spirit. Grace be with you." The peculiarity of the benediction is that it is twofold—first to Timothy separately, and then to Timothy and those with him. What Timothy is to have separately is the presence of the Lord with his nobler part; what he is to have along with others is undeserved favour.—R. F.



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THE
PULPIT COMMENTARY,

EDITED BY THE
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DEAN OF GLOUCESTER;

AND BY THE
REV. JOSEPH S. EXELL, M.A.

TITUS.

Exposition and Homiletics:

By THE RIGHT HON. AND RIGHT REV.
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LORD BISHOP OF BATH AND WELLS.

Homilies by Various Authors:

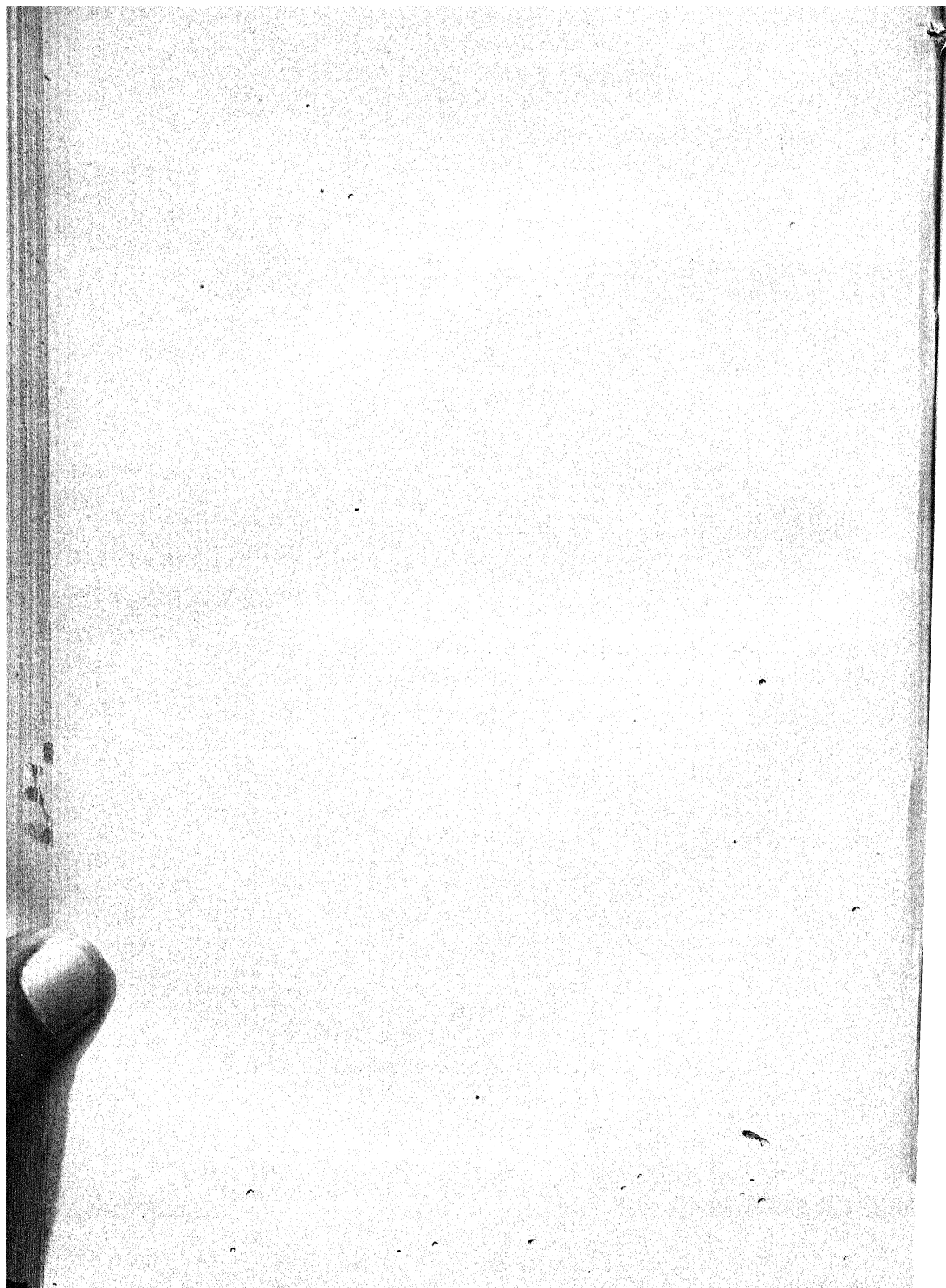
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THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO TITUS.

EXPOSITION.

CHAPTER I.

Ver. 1.—*Knowledge for acknowledging, A.V.; according to for after, A.V.* A servant of God (δοῦλος Θεοῦ); so in the superscriptions: Rom. i. 1; Phil. i. 1, δοῦλος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ; Jas. i. 1; 2 Pet. i. 1; Jude 1; Rev. i. 1. St. Paul also calls himself “the servant of Christ” (Gal. i. 10); and the phrase, δοῦλον Κυρίου, occurs in 2 Tim. ii. 24. But neither “servant of God” nor any equivalent is in the superscription of either 1 or 2 Timothy. “Servant” is a better rendering than “slave,” as Farrar renders it. An apostle, etc.; as in both 1 and 2 Timothy, and also in Rom. i. 1; 1 Cor. i. 1; 2 Cor. i. 1, etc.; showing that this is not a private letter, but a public and official document, conveying official authority to Titus over the Church in Crete. According to the faith of God’s elect. The phrase is peculiar to this passage, and the exact force of κατὰ is not easy to determine (see Bishop Ellicott’s notes, who renders κατὰ “for,” and explains that “the faith of God’s elect is the destination of the apostleship,” with the further explanation that this meaning of κατὰ is about equivalent to “with special reference to,” or “destination for,” as its object). It is nearly the same thing to say that the true faith, and the perfect knowledge of the truth, and the hope of eternal life promised by God, are the sphere in which the apostolic office moves and acts. “The faith of God’s elect,” etc., seems to imply that there was in some who were not elect (1 John ii. 19, 20) a corruption of the faith, a departure from it—a faith that was no faith, and something calling itself truth which was not “according to godliness,” and so to point to rising heresies.¹ The

authors of these heresies were chiefly Jews (ver. 10), of whom there was a considerable colony in Crete (Conybeare and Howson, vol. ii. p. 475; and Lewin, vol. ii. p. 337). According to godliness (for the use of εὐσεβεία in the pastoral Epistles, see 1 Tim. ii. 2; iii. 16; iv. 7, 8; vi. 3, 5, 6, 11; 2 Tim. iii. 5, and notes).

Ver. 2.—*Who for that, A.V.; times eternal for the world began, A.V.* In hope of eternal life. This seems to be a further description of the scope or sphere of the apostolate, which, as some take ἐν, is based upon the hope of eternal life. Who cannot lie (ἀψευδής); here only in the New Testament, rarely in the LXX., but common in classical Greek. The epithet is here used to show the certainty of the fulfilment of the promise made before the ages (comp. Heb. vi. 18; Numb. xxiii. 19). Before times eternal (see 2 Tim. i. 9, note). The translation, “before times eternal,” conveys no sense; χρόνοι αἰώνιοι are “the times of ages past” (Rom. xvi. 25), placed in opposition to the καιροὶ ἰδιοί, or to the “now” of 2 Tim. i. 10, in which the manifestation of the promise took place.

Ver. 3.—*In his own seasons for hath in due times, A.V.; in the message for through preaching, A.V.; wherewith I was entrusted for which is committed unto me, A.V.* In his own seasons. The margin, *its own seasons*, is preferable (see 1 Tim. ii. 7, note). The phrase is equivalent to “the fullness of the time” (Gal. iv. 4). Manifested his Word. There is a change of construction. “The relative sentence passes almost imperceptibly into a primary sentence” (Buttmann in Luther); “his Word” becomes the object of the verb “made manifest,” instead of “eternal life,” as one would have expected. His Word is the whole revelation of the gospel, including the Person and work of Jesus Christ. Compare St. Peter’s address to Cornelius (Acts x. 36). This “Word,” which lay in the mind of God

¹ Chrysostom, however, understands the phrase, ἀληθείας τῆς κατ’ εὐσεβείας, to denote religious truth as distinguished from any other kind of truth.

through the ages, and was only dimly expressed in the promises given from time to time (1 Pet. i. 10—12), was now “made manifest,” and proclaimed openly in that preaching of the gospel of God’s grace which was entrusted to St. Paul. This same idea is frequently expressed (see Rom. xvi. 25; Eph. i. 9, 10; iii. 3—11; 2 Tim. i. 9—11; 1 Pet. i. 20). In the message. Surely a poor and a false rendering. *Ἐν κηρύγματι* means “by the open proclamation” which St. Paul, as God’s herald, *κήρυξ*, was commanded to make. But this is better expressed by the word which is appropriated to the proclamation of the gospel, viz. “preaching.” So, as above quoted, Rom. xvi. 25; 2 Tim. i. 11, and elsewhere frequently. According to the commandment (*κατ’ ἐντολήν, κ.τ.λ.*); Rom. xvi. 26; 1 Tim. i. 1 (comp. Gal. i. 1). God our Saviour (1 Tim. i. 1; ii. 3; ch. ii. 10; iii. 4; Jude 25; and also Luke i. 47). Elsewhere in the New Testament the term “Saviour” (*Σωτήρ*) is always applied to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ver. 4.—*My true child for mine own son, A.V.; a common for the common, A.V.; grace and peace for grace, mercy, and peace, A.V. and T.R.; Christ Jesus for the Lord Jesus Christ, A.V. and T.R. My true child (γνήσιον τέκνον: 1 Tim. i. 2) after a common faith (κατὰ κοινὴν πίστιν). In 1 Tim. i. 2 it is ἐν πίστει (where see note). Beyond all doubt, Alford is right in both cases in rendering “the faith” (see his note on 1 Tim. i. 2). The “common faith” means the faith of all God’s elect. Grace and peace. So the R.T., omitting *ἔλεος*, mercy, which is found in 1 Tim. i. 2 and 2 Tim. i. 2. But the manuscripts vary, and the critics are divided as to whether *ἔλεος* ought to be retained here or not.*

Ver. 5.—*Were for are, A.V.; appoint for ordain, A.V.; gave thee charge for had appointed thee, A.V. Left I thee in Crete. We have no account of St. Paul’s visit to Crete, nor do we know how the gospel was first brought to Crete. It may have been by some of those “Cretes” who were at Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost, and heard the apostles speak in their tongue “the wonderful works of God” (Acts ii. 11), or by other Christian Jews visiting the Jewish community in Crete (note to ver. 1). If St. Paul was returning from Spain, and travelling by ship eastward, Crete would be on his way. The importance of the island, with which he made some acquaintance on his voyage from Caesarea to Rome (Acts xxvii. 7, 8), and the large Jewish colony there, may naturally have inclined him to visit it. How long he remained there we do not know, but he did not stay long enough to organize the Church there com-*

pletely. There were still things “wanting” (*τὰ λείποντα*), as it follows. This mention of Crete is an important chronological mark. The order of St. Paul’s progress, as gathered from the three pastoral Epistles, is very distinct—Crete, Miletus, Troas, Macedonia, Corinth, Nicopolis, Rome. He dropped Titus at Crete, and left Timothy behind at Ephesus. The Epistle to Titus, therefore, is the first of the three pastoral Epistles, and this is borne out by another circumstance. When he wrote to Titus he had not made up his mind whether he should send Artemas or Tychicus to take his place in Crete when he rejoined the apostle (ch. iii. 12). But when he wrote 2 Timothy he had sent Tychicus to Ephesus to replace Timothy (2 Tim. iv. 12), and Titus had already joined him, and been sent on by him to Dalmatia, presumably from Nicopolis. Set in order (*ἐπιδιορθώσῃ*); only here in the New Testament, and not found in the LXX. nor in classical Greek, except as a technical word in the art of rhetoric. But *διορθώω* is very common in classical Greek (see *ἐπανόρθωσις*, 2 Tim. iii. 16). The force of *ἐν* in the compound here is “further,” or “in addition.” St. Paul had set the Church in order up to a certain point. But there were still certain things wanting, *τὰ λείποντα* (see ch. iii. 13; Luke xviii. 22); and these Titus was to supply and give the finishing touch to. *Appoint (καταστήσῃς)*. This is a better rendering than the A.V. “ordain,” because it is a general word for “to appoint, make.” Probably the A.V. “ordain” was not intended to be taken in a strictly technical sense, but is used as in Heb. v. 1; viii. 3. The technical word was usually “to order.” “The Ordering of Deacons,” or “of Priests,” is the title of the service in the Book of Common Prayer. “Meet to be ordered.” “shall surcease from ordering,” occur repeatedly in the rubrics. *Elders (πρεσβυτέρους)*; i.e. presbyters, or priests (comp. Acts xiv. 23; and see Acts xi. 30, note). In every city (*κατὰ πόλιν*); city by city. The phrase has a peculiar significance in Crete, which used to be famous for its hundred cities. It shows, too, that Christianity was widely spread among the cities of the island. The germ of the episcopal office, one bishop and many presbyters, is here very conspicuous.

Ver. 6.—*Any man is for any be, A.V.; children that believe for faithful children, A.V.; who are not for not, A.V. Blameless (ἀνεγκλήτος); see 1 Tim. iii. 10, note. The husband of one wife (see 1 Tim. iii. 2, note¹).*

¹ Tyndale contends that St. Paul’s meaning is that every priest ought to have a wife, but only one alive at the same time

Having children that believe (see 1 Tim. iii. 4). Mark the importance given to the "elder's" family as well as to his personal character. Not accused (*μη ἐν κατηγορίᾳ κ.τ.λ.*); literally, *not under an accusation* (see 1 Tim. v. 19). Riot (*ἀσωτίας*); see Eph. v. 18; 1 Pet. iv. 4; Luke xv. 18. Used in Plato and Aristotle for "debauchery" or "profligacy," with the kindred words *ἀσώτος*, *ἀσωτεύουμαι*, etc. Unruly (*ἀνυπότακτα*); ver. 10 and 1 Tim. i. 9, note (comp. 1 Tim. iii. 4, where the children are required to be *ἐν ὑποταγῇ*, "under rule," in subjection).

Ver. 7.—*The for a*, A.V.: *God's steward for the steward of God*, A.V.; *no brawler for not given to wine*, A.V.; *greedy of for given to*, A.V. Blameless (see ver. 6). God's steward (*οἰκονόμος*); comp. 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2; 1 Pet. iv. 10. (For the office of the steward, see Luke xii. 42, 43.) Self-willed (*αὐθάδης*); elsewhere in the New Testament only in 2 Pet. ii. 10; in the LXX. Gen. xlix. 3, 9 and Prov. xxi. 24; and common in classical Greek. It is always used in a bad sense—stubborn, harsh, remorseless, and the like. Soon angry (*ὀργίλος*); only here in the New Testament, found occasionally in the LXX., and common in classical Greek—passionate, quick-tempered, irascible (comp. Eph. iv. 31; Col. iii. 8). Brawler (*πάροικον*); see 1 Tim. iii. 3, note. Striker (1 Tim. iii. 3, note). Greedy of filthy lucre (*αἰσχροχερδῆ*); 1 Tim. iii. 3, 8, note.

Ver. 8.—*Given to for a lover of*, A.V.; *good for good men*, A.V.; *sober-minded for sober*, A.V. Given to hospitality (*φιλόξενον*); 1 Tim. iii. 2, note. A lover of good (*φιλόκαλον*); see 2 Tim. iii. 3, note on *φιλόκαλον*. Only here in the New Testament, and only once in the LXX., Wisd. vii. 22, where it seems to mean "a lover of that which is good," and where the long string of adjectives is very similar to that here; found occasionally in classical Greek. Sober-minded (*σώφρονα*); see ch. ii. 2, 5, and 1 Tim. iii. 2, note. The rendering "discreet" in ch. ii. 5 (A.V.) expresses the meaning very well. Just, holy. *Δίκαιος* is usually considered as describing that side of a good man's character which is in relation to his fellow-men, and *δσιος* that side which has respect to God. Joseph was *δίκαιος* (Matt. i. 19) in his conduct towards Mary; the Lord Jesus was God's Holy One (*τὸν δσιός σου*). In classical Greek the words are more commonly applied to things. "*Ὅσα καὶ δίκαια* are things sanctioned by Divine and human laws respectively. Temperate (*ἐγκρατῆς*); only here in the New Testament, and never in this sense in the LXX.; but it has

exactly the same meaning in Aristotle, viz. "master of one's self," having the appetites under control.

Ver. 9.—*Holding to for holding fast*, A.V.; *which is according to the teaching for as he hath been taught*, A.V.; *both to exhort in the sound doctrine for by sound doctrine, both to exhort*, A.V.; *convict for convince*, A.V. Holding to (*ἀντεχόμενος*). Holding fast is a better and more forcible rendering than holding to. It answers to the Latin *adherere*, to cling to. The faithful word which is according to the teaching is awkwardly expressed. Ἡ διδαχὴ is "the Christian truth" as taught by the apostles, and "the faithful" or "sure word" to which Titus is to cleave is described as being "according to that truth" (comp. ch. i. 1, *ἀληθείας τῆς κατ' εὐσεβείαν*). The A.V. gives substantially the apostle's meaning. The result of this adhesion to the faithful word is that he will be able to comfort and encourage believers by (*ἐν*) his wholesome teaching, and also to convict the opposers of the truth. The gainsayers; or, *contradictors* (*τοὺς ἀντιλέγοντας*); such as those Jews described in Acts xiii. 45 and xxviii. 19 as "contradicting and blaspheming."

Ver. 10.—*Unruly men for unruly and*, A.V. and T.R. Unruly (*ἀνυπότακτοι*); see ver. 6. Vain talkers (*ματαιολόγοι*); only here in the New Testament, not found in the LXX., and rare in classical Greek (see *ματαιολογία*, 1 Tim. i. 6). *κενολόγος* and *κενολογία* are used in the same sense of "vain, empty, talking." Deceivers—(*φρεναπάται*); here only in the New Testament, not found in the LXX. or in classical Greek—literally, *soul-deceivers*, or, as some take it, *self-deceivers* (compare *φρεναπατάω*, Gal. vi. 3, and for the sense Jas. i. 26; but in both these instances the idea of self-deceiving is imported by the context, *ἐαυτὸν* and *καρδίαν αὐτοῦ*). Here the word means "deceivers," whose character is described in 2 Pet. ii. 14 as "beguiling unstable souls." They of the circumcision; Judaizing Christians, the most obstinate and difficult adversaries with whom St. Paul had to cope (see Gal. *passim*; Phil. iii. 2, 3, etc.).

Ver. 11.—*Men who overthrow for who subvert*, A.V. Whose mouths must be stopped (*ὅς δὲ ἐπιστομῇ*); here only in the New Testament, not found in the LXX., but common in classical Greek. "To curb" (comp. Ps. xxxii. 9; Jas. iii. 2, 3). The meaning is nearly the same as that of *χαλιναγωγέω* in Jas. i. 26; some, however, assign to it the sense of "to muzzle" (Olshausen, etc.) or "stop the mouth," which Bishop Ellicott thinks is "perhaps the most common" and "the most suitable." So

(Answer to Sir Thos. More,' bk. iii. ch. xiii.)

¹ It may be worth noticing that the horses

also Huther. It often means simply "to silence" (see Stephan, 'Thesaur.'), and is applied to wind instruments. Overthrow (*ἀνατρέψει*); as 2 Tim. ii. 18, which shows the kind of overthrow here meant, that viz. of the faith of whole families, well expressed in the A.V. by "subvert." The phrase, *οἰκίας ἀνατρέψει*, of the literal overthrow of houses, occurs in Plato (Alford). For filthy lucre's sake; contrary to the apostolic precept to bishops and deacons (1 Tim. iii. 3, 8, and above, ver. 7). Polybius has a striking passage on the *αἰσχροκερδέα* of the Cretans, quoted by Bishop Ellicott ('Hist.', vi. 146. 3).

Ver. 12.—*A prophet for even a prophet, A.V.; Cretans for the Cretians, A.V.; idle gluttons for slow bellies, A.V.* A prophet of their own; viz. Epimenides, a native either of Phæstus or of Cnossus in Crete, the original author of this line, which is also quoted by Callimachus. Epimenides is here called a prophet, not simply as a poet, but from his peculiar character as priest, bard, and seer; called by Plato *θεῖος ἄνθρωπος*, and coupled by Cicero with Bacis the Boeotian prophet, and the sibyl (Bishop Ellicott); described by other ancient writers as a prophet (Alford); "everything we hear of him is of a priestly or religious nature" ('Dict. of Gr. and Rom. Biogr. and Mythol.'). Cretans are always liars, etc. So truly was this their characteristic, that *κηρύττειν* was used to denote "telling lies"—"to lie like a Cretan" (Plutarch, etc.). From their general bad character arose the line, *Κρήτες, Κακπᾶδοκοι, Κίλικες, τρία κάππα κάκιστα*; and Livy, Polybius, and Plutarch alike bear witness to their covetousness and dishonesty: *Τὴς Κρητῶν οἷδε δικαιοσύνην*; "When was there ever an upright Cretan?" asks Leonides in an 'Epigram' (Farrar, 'St. Paul,' vol. ii. p. 534). Evil beasts. *Θῆριον* is "a wild beast;" applied to men as a term of reproach (1 Cor. xv. 32), it implies brutality, stupidity, unreasonableness, and, with the epithet *κακά*, mischief, like the French *méchante bête*. The 'Epigram' above quoted calls them *ληισταὶ καὶ ἀλιφθόροι*, "pirates and wreckers." Idle gluttons; literally, *idle bellies*. The substantive denotes their gluttony and sensuality (comp. Rom. xvi. 18; Phil. iii. 19, where *ἡ κοιλία* is equivalent to *γαστήρ*¹), and the adjective their sloth (*ἀργαί, i.e. ἀεργαί*); in old Greek it is usually of the common gender.

Ver. 13.—*Testimony for witness, A.V.; for which cause for wherefore, A.V.; reprove for rebuke, A.V.* Sharply (*ἀποτομᾶς*); elsewhere

on Etruscan vases are usually represented as in effect muzzled by the bridle, and have their mouths shut; so that the two senses of the word would really be only one.

¹ In the New Testament, *γαστήρ* is applied exclusively to the womb.

only in 2 Cor. xiii. 10 (see also Rom. xi. 22). That they may be sound (see ch. ii. 2). The faithful pastor must use severity when it is necessary to the spiritual health of the flock, just as the skilful surgeon uses the knife to save the patient's life.

Ver. 14.—*Who for that, A.V.; turn away for turn, A.V.* Jewish fables (see 1 Tim. i. 4; iv. 7; 2 Tim. iv. 4, where the Jewish origin of the fables is implied, though not so distinctly stated as here). Commandments of men (*ἐντολαὶς ἀνθρώπων*); so in Col. ii. 22 the apostle speaks of the precepts "touch not," "taste not" (originating with the Judaizing teachers), as *τὰ ἐντάλματα καὶ διδασκαλίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων* (see following note). Turning away from (*ἀποστρέφόμενον*); see 2 Tim. i. 15, note.

Ver. 15.—*To for unto, A.V. (twice); nothing is for is nothing, A.V.; both for even, A.V.; their conscience for conscience, A.V.; are for is, A.V.* To the pure, etc. This allusion shows clearly that the "commandments of men," here condemned, are of the same kind as those referred to in the above-quoted passage in the Colossians. We learn also from Rom. xiv. 1; 1 Cor. viii.; and elsewhere, what were the kind of questions which agitated the Judaizing Christians. But St. Paul in a few wise words shows the utter worthlessness of such controversies. "To the pure all things are pure." "There is nothing from without a man," said our Lord, "that entering into him can defile him" (Mark vii. 15); "Neither if we eat are we the better, neither if we eat not are we the worse" (1 Cor. viii. 8); "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. xiv. 17). But unto those that are defiled by what comes from within them, and have no faith (Rom. xiv. 23), nothing is pure. Their mind and conscience, being defiled, defile everything they do. The words *καθαρόν* and *μιαῖνα* are the proper words for ceremonial "cleanness" and "defilement" respectively.

Ver. 16.—*By their for in, A.V.* They profess that they know God (comp. Rom. ii. 17-20). The arrogant claim to be God's people and to superior holiness, while all the while they were denying God by their evil deeds, and bringing dishonour upon his Name among the Gentiles, was a marked feature of the Jews in St. Paul's time (comp. 2 Tim. iii. 5). Abominable (*βδελυκτοί*); objects or causes of disgust; only here in the New Testament, but found in the LXX. But *βδελυγμα* and *βδελύσσομαι* are not uncommon. Reprobate (*ἀδύκμοι*); as 2 Tim. iii. 8 (where see note). This picture of the circumcision is indeed sad (comp. 1 Thess. ii. 15, 16; Acts xxviii. 25-28).

HOMILETICS.

Vers. 1—16.—*The ministry of character.* The pastoral Epistles, and this chapter in particular, bring prominently before us the Christian ministry as of commanding importance in the scheme of Christianity. Christianity, the sum and substance of Christian doctrine, was to be diffused among all nations; and the great instrument for maintaining it in efficiency and power was to be the ministry. But in describing the ministerial qualifications the apostle lays so much stress upon the personal character of the ministers, as to make us feel that the Christian ministry of which he speaks is a ministry of character as much as of preaching, or teaching, or any other ministration. Looking at this side of the ministry, we learn that it is the purpose of the great Head of the Church, Jesus Christ our Lord, that his doctrine and the truth which he brought down from heaven should be presented to the world in the lives and characters of his accredited servants and ambassadors. Those servants of his were to be scattered among the people, "in every city," and every village, where the gospel message had been brought, and the people were not only to hear from their lips, but were to see in their lives, the nature and practical effect of the doctrine delivered to them. And, in truth, the eloquence of holy, loving, and self-denying lives is more persuasive than that of any words, however good and however beautiful. We feel, even after reading the words of the Master himself, and having felt their power, that there is a still greater power in that life and death, wherein were embodied, in all the beauty of love and goodness, the sublime precepts which he taught. While, therefore, we see the importance of a learned clergy, an eloquent clergy, an orthodox clergy, and withal a clergy of business habits, we shall do well to keep steadily in view the commanding and essential quality of high and consistent Christian character, showing itself in all the details of the daily intercourse of life. The clergy of the Church should be the epistle of Christ, known and read of all men in every place where they are located, as bishops, priests, or deacons. In their manner of life and whole conversation should be seen worked out in practice what the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is intended to effect in the renewal of human nature. Their conduct and character should be a living commentary on the Word of God which they preach to the people, and their silent argument for pressing it upon the people's acceptance. And hence we may deduce the importance of a resident ministry. The functions of preaching and ministering the sacraments may be performed by strangers. The effectual sermon of a holy Christian life requires "elders" resident amidst the community to whom they preach. The pure morals, the well-ordered families, the meek and patient behaviour under provocation, the kindly genial sympathies, the fair and equitable dealing, the sober gravity, the self-control and self-mastery of the servant of God, must be seen near in the daily intercourse of life, to be judged of and appreciated. It is the glory of the English Church that, by means of her endowments, she is able to place a minister of Christ to reside in every parish. Let every such minister remember that the interests of the Christian faith are bound up with his own manner of life and that of his household, and do his utmost endeavour that that life may be a faithful reflection of the grace of God, which teaches men to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, while we wait for the appearing of the glory of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Vers. 1—4.—*Apostolic address and salutation.* The full representation which the apostle gives of his apostolic office is designed at once to mark the authority by which he gives the instructions that follow, and to serve as an index to the contents of the whole Epistle.

I. THE CLAIMS OF THE APOSTLE. "Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ." 1. *He is a servant of God.* Not, as he often describes himself, "a servant of Jesus Christ." The title seems to mark the relation (1) of one who had once been a slave to sin, but, having become free through Christ Jesus, was still, so far as obligation, service, and life were concerned, a servant of God; (2) his devotion to God, after

the type of Old Testament service, Moses and the prophets being pre-eminently called the "servants of God;" (3) his ministry in the service of a royal Master (Matt. xviii. 23—32), who makes him a member of his household, a pillar of his temple, a sharer of his throne (Rev. iii. 21). 2. *He is an apostle of Jesus Christ.* This is a more exact definition of his office. (1) He had his commission and his doctrine from him. (2) He had all the signs and proofs of an apostle in him, for he had received power to work miracles as well as to declare Divine truth. (3) It is, therefore, vain and deceptive for any to assume the name who cannot show the signs of an apostle.

II. THE END OF THE APOSTOLIC OFFICE. "For the faith of God's elect, and the full knowledge of the truth which is after godliness." It was designed for the furtherance of the faith and knowledge of believers. 1. *The apostle felt that he was appointed to preach the doctrine of faith, and to be the instrument of bringing men to the obedience of faith.* (Rom. i. 5; x. 17.) (1) Therefore all claims to apostolic authority by men who have abandoned the faith, or overlaid it with error and superstition, are to be rejected by the Church of God. (2) All true faith rests on the Divine foreordination; for it is "the faith of God's elect." Election is, therefore, not to be regarded as equivalent to faith, much less as its consequence (Eph. i. 4); for it is its true cause. The Father is the Elector, as the Son is the Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit the Sanctifier. 2. *The apostolic office was designed likewise to impart the full knowledge of the truth which is after godliness.* (1) Truth is the object—the Word of truth, which comes from him who is the God of truth, who is Christ the Truth itself, who is the Spirit of truth. It was this truth that the apostle preached with all faithfulness and clearness. (2) Knowledge is the subjective aspect of it, and becomes ours through faith. (3) The fruit of this truth is "godliness." It is designed to promote holiness of life and character. It is impossible that this knowledge can be morally unfruitful.

III. THE BASIS OF THIS TRUTH. "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before eternal times." The ground and condition of this truth is the hope of eternal life, which is the animating principle at once of the apostle and of the Church of God. 1. *The principle of hope.* The word occurs fifty-two times in the New Testament, and is always connected with God, with the Mediator, and with believers. (1) Its author is God, who is "the God of hope" (Rom. xv. 13), who has given us "a good hope through grace" (2 Thess. ii. 16), and given us Christ as "our Hope," even "the Hope of glory." (2) Hope connects us with the future as memory with the past, and is intended to neutralize the materializing influence of earthly life around us. Thus, God has given us prophecy and promise to gratify the wants, the longings, and the anticipations of the human soul. 2. *The object and sum of Christian hope.* "Eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before eternal times." (1) This life is in Christ Jesus; "for the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23). But it includes (a) the full fruition of God to all eternity; (b) the fellowship of the Redeemer's throne; (c) the fulness of joy; (d) likeness to Christ. (2) It is eternal life, without a break in the happy continuity of bliss; for it is life without sin or death to mar its perfectness. It is eternal, because he is at once its Author and Support, as being that "Eternal Life that was with the Father" (1 John i. 2). (3) The age of this promise. "Before eternal times." (a) This is not merely before the times of the world, or (b) before the world began, (c) but really in the eternity past; because the reference is not to the covenants of Adam or Abraham, but to the covenant of redemption in Christ before the foundation of the world (2 Tim. i. 9—11). The apostle does not merely say that the promise of eternal life was the result of a Divine purpose fixed from eternity, but that it was made from eternity to believers, because it was made to Christ, whose members they are. It is impossible to understand the meaning of these words without reference to the federal transaction between the Father and the Son (Zech. vi. 13). This was the very "promise of life in Christ Jesus" of which the apostle speaks to Timothy (2 Tim. i. 1). (4) The guarantee for the fulfilment of this promise. "God, that cannot lie, promised" it. God gave both a promise and an oath to Abraham, that "by two immutable things, in which it was impossible that God should lie," we should have a sure hope (Heb. vi. 18).

IV. THE MANIFESTATION OF THIS ANCIENT PROMISE. "But in his own seasons manifested his Word in the message wherewith I was entrusted, according to the commandment of God our Saviour." 1. *The manifestation was made in God's own seasons.*

(1) It is not to be supposed that it was made only by the Apostle Paul, for it was made by the other apostles; and ages before their day it was manifested, with more or less clearness, under the Old Testament dispensation. (2) But the Apostle Paul was one of those specially entrusted with the Word, and specially with "the revelation of the mystery hid for ages" (Rom. xvi. 25). 2. *The Word of God, and the whole order and fulness of the Church, are to be regarded as the unfolding of the ancient promise of eternal life.* 3. *The Word is made manifest by preaching.* (Rom. x. 17.) Preaching is an institute peculiar to Christianity, which it formed for itself as its chosen mode of utterance. Christianity is not a philosophy or a thaumaturgy. It is propagated, not by priests, but by preachers. There are no priests in Christianity but the one High Priest of our profession, who, if he were on earth, would not be a priest (Heb. viii. 4). 4. *The preaching is done in virtue of a Divine call or commission.* "Wherewith I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our Saviour." All the ministries of the New Testament, high and low, are committed as trusts to the Church. Therefore a minister ought to have a true call from on high before accepting the responsibilities of office. The apostle was very emphatic in announcing his call to the apostleship, not as in any way due to his own will or wish, but to Divine command. It was the command of "God his Saviour;" not the Son, but the Father—the usual phrase of the apostle being "according to the will of God" (2 Tim. i. 1).

V. THE APOSTOLIC SALUTATION. "To Titus, my true son after the common faith." 1. *The person thus addressed.* (1) Titus was a pure Gentile. It is interesting to remember that the dearest friends and companions of the apostle's life were Gentiles, and not Jews—such as Luke, Titus, and Timothy, who was half-Gentile. Was this leaning caused in any degree by the distrusts and enmities with which he was pursued through life by his Jewish countrymen? (2) Titus was, like Timothy, one of the apostle's converts. This fact would endear him to the apostle's heart. He was a genuine son of the apostle in virtue of the faith common to all Christians; implying that (a) there is but one faith (Eph. iv. 5); (b) one Object of faith, Jesus Christ; (c) one end of faith, eternal life. (3) Titus was evidently one of the apostle's most trusty disciples, though he was less a companion than Timothy, and less allied to him on the terms of an affectionate intimacy. Titus was firm, strong, and capable, with adaptability in the way of administration and of repressing moral disorders among distracted or disturbed communities. 2. *The greeting.* "Grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour." (1) The blessings sought for Titus. "Grace and peace." (a) Grace is the full and eternal fountain of the goodness of God, opened to the wants of men in the blessed gospel; (b) peace is the blessing of the saints, to which they are called in one body, and the safeguard of heart and mind through him who is their Peace (Phil. iv. 7). (2) The source of these blessings, alike God the Father and God the Son, as being equally the Author and Giver of all spiritual blessings. The whole structure of the Epistle is based on the doctrine of the Deity of Christ.—T. C.

Ver. 5.—*Titus's commission in Crete.* Its object was principally to supply the deficiencies in the Church organization of the island.

I. THE SCENE OF TITUS'S LABOURS—CRETE. 1. *Its situation and history.* It lies almost equidistant from Europe, Asia, and Africa; a large and populous island of the Mediterranean; the Caphtor of the Old Testament, and now known as Candia. It was a place of ancient civilization, noted for its hundred cities, and became a Roman possession about seventy years before Christ. 2. *The foundation of the Cretan Church.* This probably occurred immediately after Pentecost, for it is said that men of Crete were present on that occasion (Acts ii. 11), and we know that the island abounded with Jews of wealth and influence. The false teachers in Crete were Judaists. There are several reasons for believing that the Church must have been a considerable time in existence. Time must be allowed for the development of heresy. Time must likewise be allowed for the growth of character and reputation, so that Titus, guided by the Church, might have no difficulty in selecting the right class of office-bearers. The fact, likewise, that the bishops were to "have believing children" affords a strong presumption that the Church must have been in existence at least twenty or thirty years. 3. *Its existence without organization.* The Church in Crete seems to have had no regular parties, the ordinances were probably in confusion, and though the power of

heathenism had been broken in one of its quasi-strongholds, the Christians had not utterly escaped contamination. The state of matters in this interesting island proves (1) that there may be a true Church where there is no regular ministry. Thus there is no foundation for the theory that the clergy are the Church, or even essential to its existence, though they are necessary to its edification. (2) It proves also that a regular ministry is necessary. Therefore the arguments of Darbyites go for nothing. A ministry was specially needed to check the unruly and vain talkers in Crete, as well as to apply the sanctifying influence of the gospel, as well as a wholesome Christian discipline to the cure of moral disorders.

II. THE SCOPE OF TITUS'S LABOURS. "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou mightest set in order the things that were wanting, and ordain elders in every city." The apostle had himself successfully laboured in the island, and the gospel had in consequence spread among many of its cities. But he had been summoned away from the scene before he could do anything to organize the community or regulate its varied Church life. He therefore sent Titus as his delegate to discharge this duty. 1. *Titus was to set in order the things that were wanting.* As Crete was a most luxurious and corrupt place, as heathenism affected its whole family and public life, as the Church had got into disorder through its contiguity to paganism, or was unable to organize itself strongly in the face of a hostile world, Titus was left behind to fix the order and circumstances of public worship, including the celebration of Christian ordinances, to establish a godly discipline which would purify family life, to instruct the Cretans more fully in the doctrines of the gospel which were attacked by designing Judaists, and generally to superintend the development of all matters affecting Christian faith and practice. 2. *He was to ordain elders in every city.* (1) The elders were the pastors or teachers of congregations, and were so called on account of their age and gravity of manner. They were also called "bishops" (ver. 2; Acts xx. 17, 28), on account of their office as overseers of the flock. It is now universally conceded that these names are but different designations of the same office-bearers. We read in Scripture of "bishops and deacons" (Phil. i. 1), but never of "bishops and elders," simply because bishops and deacons represent two different orders, but bishops and elders do not. These bishops were simply the pastors of congregations. (2) There were several elders in each congregation. Titus was "to ordain elders in every city," that is, a plurality of elders for each Church. There was certainly a plurality in several Churches (Acts xiv. 23; xv. 22). (3) These elders were to be ordained or solemnly set apart to their office. (a) The word "ordain" throws no light on the question whether the appointment took place with or without the co-operation of the Church. But the same word is used in the account of the ordination of the deacons who were chosen by the Christian people (Acts vi. 3). In another case (Acts xiv. 23) the ordination of elders did not take place without the co-operation of the Church, which selected by a show of hands, as the word signifies, the candidates for ordination. The directions given by the apostle to Titus with regard to the qualifications of elders imply that the choice lay, not with Titus, who was a complete stranger to Crete, but with the body of the Christian people who were familiarly acquainted with the private work and public gifts of believers. (b) The ordination was the act of Titus, who was the delegate of the apostle. It is not improbable that Zenas and Apollos, who were then in Crete, were associated with him in the act of ordination. It is now generally admitted that he was not appointed permanent Bishop of Crete, for his stay was designed to be short (ch. iii. 12). This whole passage proves the importance of Church organization, while it presupposes a certain amount of Christian knowledge and feeling among the members of the Cretan Church.—T. C.

Vers. 6, 7.—*The character of bishops—their negative qualifications.* The apostle first mentions their qualifications in a moral point of view before he speaks of their duties as teachers.

I. BLAMELESSNESS. The minister must be one against whom no charge can be brought. His name must be spotless (1 Cor. i. 8; Col. i. 22). The Church must be able to respect him. 1. *Because he must be an example to the believers.* 2. *Because he could not otherwise consistently check or reprove the blameworthy ways of others.* (Ch. i. 13.) Christian life in Crete was unsound both as to morals and doctrine. 3.

Because as "a steward of God" he has grave responsibilities, both to God and to the flock. He must be both wise and faithful in relation to the "house of God, . . . the Church of the living God" (1 Tim. iii. 15), which is entrusted to his keeping.

II. THE HUSBAND OF ONE WIFE. His family relationships are of much moment, for polygamy was the established rule of heathenism. 1. *This passage does not make the marriage of ministers compulsory*, as it is in the case of priests in the Greek Church. 2. *It is totally inconsistent with the principle of the celibacy of ministers in the Church of Rome.* 3. *It does not prevent the second marriage of a minister, which is sanctioned by Scripture.* (Rom. vii. 1; 1 Cor. vii. 8, 9, 39.) 4. *It simply condemns polygamy.*

III. THE CONDUCT OF HIS CHILDREN. "Having believing children, who are not accused of riot or unruly." 1. *The bishop will be judged by his family life.* The family is the nursery of the Church, and these two societies act and react upon each other reciprocally, so that a bad or weak or injudicious father can never be an efficient or respected minister. If he cannot rule his children, how can he rule the Church of God (1 Tim. iii. 5)? 2. *His children ought to be:* (1) Believers, adorning the doctrine of the gospel by purity and obedience. There must be evidence that they have been brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. (2) They ought to be free from the imputation of dissoluteness. There must be no ill reports concerning profligacy. (3) They must not be unruly, that is, disobedient to parents. Those ministers would be unfit to govern the Church whose authority was disregarded by their own children. The minister's home in Crete was, therefore, to be a pattern of order, purity, and piety.

IV. NOT SELF-WILLED. The elder ought not to cherish: 1. *A self-loving spirit*, which leads to the disregard of the rights, or claims, or feelings of others. 2. *A haughty and imperious temper.* One who is both obstinate and proud can have no influence over his flock. He ought to be humble, easy to be entreated, able to rule his own spirit, and considerate to others.

V. NOT SOON ANGRY. 1. *He ought to have a temper not quickly provoked by contradiction or evil-speaking.* Many tongues will be busy with him, as many eyes will be watchfully turned upon his walk. 2. *He ought to remember the temper of his Master*, "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again." He ought to be "slow to wrath," and imitate the Divine long-suffering and patience.

VI. NO BRAWLER. The word suggests the conduct of one insolent through wine, quarrelsome and furious. The minister must not only abstain from drunkenness, but avoid the passionate folly of men carried away by this sin.

VII. NO STRIKER. He must never lift his hand against his fellows. 1. *He is the peacemaker of his parish.* 2. *How can he restrain the violence of others if he cannot hold his own hands?*

VIII. NOT GIVEN TO FILTHY LUCRE. 1. *Covetousness is idolatry in a minister as well as in the members of his flock.* It implies the existence of a divided heart. 2. *An avaricious temper is condemned by the example of Christ*, who, "though he was rich, became poor" to make many rich. 3. *It is a peculiarly heinous sin to make a gain of godliness.* 4. *A covetous minister will seek his own things, not the things of Jesus Christ.*—T. C.

Ver. 8.—*The bishop's positive qualifications.* I. BUT A LOVER OF HOSPITALITY. 1. *This trait was specially suitable to a time when Christians, travelling from one place to another, were in the habit of receiving kindly entertainment from brethren.* 2. *This habit may bring blessing to our houses.* Some have thereby "entertained angels unawares" (Heb. xiii. 2). 3. *It recommends the gospel to find its ministers ready at all times to feed the hungry, opening heart and house to the poor and needy* (Luke xiv. 13). 4. *Yet the hospitality is not to be that of luxury or sensuality.*

II. A LOVER OF GOOD. It points to a heart in sympathy with everything good and noble and of good report, as opposed to the corrupt tendencies at work in Cretan society.

III. SOBER. 1. *The word points to the self-restraint which controls the passions, in accordance with the dictates of conscience, reason, and the gospel of Christ.* It is opposed to the irascibility already condemned in ministers (ver. 7). 2. *It points to*

sobriety of intellect; for the minister must not be led away by false enthusiasm, or entangled with spiritual fanaticism. He is to follow quietly the even tenor of his way, under the guidance of truth.

IV. JUST. 1. *There must be the full recognition of the rights of others.* 2. *There must be such a management of pastoral duty* that poor and rich, ignorant and learned, will be treated with the most impartial fairness. There must be "no respect of persons." 3. *There must be no casting of stumbling-blocks in the way of others.* 4. *There must be sincerity, uprightness, and faithfulness* in admonitions and counsels.

V. HOLY. The minister must be true in his relations to God. 1. *He rejoices to be numbered with the company of the saints.* 2. *His conduct must flow from a holy heart, as the effect of a new heart.* 3. *His holiness must rebuke the ungodly,* and make his words like ointment poured forth. 4. *It implies a separateness of walk,* like him "who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners."

VI. TEMPERATE. This word points to eating and drinking, to lusts of the flesh, to abstinence even from things lawful for the sake of peace and the glory of God.—T. C.

Vers. 9.—*The bishop's qualification as to doctrine.* The apostle reserves to the last place the most important of all the qualifications needed by elders.

I. THE DUTY OF ADHERING TO THE TRUTH. "Holding fast the faithful Word which is according to the teaching." 1. *The doctrine of the gospel is "the faithful word:"* (1) Because it contains nothing but the truth. (2) Because it never deceived any that trusted in it. (3) Because it truly displays the faithfulness of God. 2. *It is no mere subjective opinion of the preacher,* but is based upon or in agreement with the teaching of the apostles. "Which is according to the teaching." The truth is not to be discovered by the preacher, but delivered to him. 3. *It is to be steadfastly maintained.* The preacher is not to allow it to be wrested from his grasp by false teachers. The apostle was always emphatic as to the importance of this duty. "Hold fast the form of sound doctrine, which thou heardest from me" (2 Tim. i. 13); "Continue thou in the things thou hast learned" (2 Tim. iii. 14). It was a powerful lever in his hands for moving the hearts of men.

II. THE DESIGN OF THIS QUALIFICATION. "That he may be able both to exhort in the sound doctrine and to convince the gainsayers." 1. *The preacher must be qualified for exhortation in the sphere of a sound, healthy, practical teaching.* This implies that men had some knowledge of the truth, but they need to be persuaded to follow it rather than a morbid and unpractical teaching that can in no way minister to edification. 2. *He must be qualified to refute the arguments of false teachers.* And nothing is so powerfully conducive to this end as sound doctrine firmly held and wisely applied.—T. C.

Vers. 10—13.—*The character of the adversaries at Crete.* They were within the communion of the Christian Church. It was, therefore, all the more necessary that the ministers should be holy, laborious, and uncorrupt.

I. THE MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THESE ADVERSARIES. "For there are many unruly men, vain talkers and deceivers, especially they of the circumcision." 1. *They were refractory.* Though standing in Church relationships, they refused all obedience, and pursued purely factious and divisive courses, that led to the subversion of discipline and the distraction of families. Such persons mar the prosperity of many a Church. 2. *They were vain talkers.* Corruption quickly makes its way from the heart to the lips, and flows forth in glib and empty babbling. (1) There is no allusion here to heresy, for the vain talking is merely opposed to useful and solid doctrine. The teachers were fluent and superficial, speaking, perhaps, great swelling words of vanity, which were of no profit to the hearers. (2) The tongue was made for speaking, but it is the Lord's will that it should always be used for his glory. It ought to be the utterer of the "wisdom that is from above," which is "first pure, then peaceable." (3) Vain talkers are the pest of Churches and families, sowing the seeds of distrust and turning men's minds against the gospel. 3. *They were deceivers.* They deceived others by their good words and fair speeches, their vain speculations and their dexterous arguments, and thus became very dangerous persons. 4. *They were of "the circumcision" party in the Church.* (1) They were members of the Church,

and therefore in a position to do much mischief. (2) They were Judaizing Christians, who blended the Law and the gospel, teaching that circumcision was necessary to salvation. (3) They were the persistent enemies of the Apostle Paul through his whole life, and thwarted him in his labours in every part of Asia and Europe.

II. THE EFFECT OF THEIR SEDUCTION. "Subverting whole houses." They pursued a process of sapping and mining, subverting the faith (2 Tim. ii. 18), and bringing whole families to disorder and ruin. It was not a case of mischief done to a few isolated individuals. Thus they undermined the peace and stability of the Church itself.

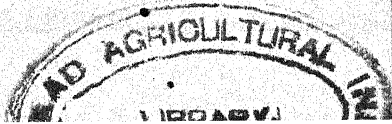
III. THE MOTIVE OF THEIR TEACHING. "Teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." The real root of the evil is laid bare by the apostle. It was a sordid love of gain. Therefore the teaching was such as would accommodate itself to the prejudices of men. These men had no regard for God's honour, for the interest of Christ, or for the welfare of souls; they only sought to increase their worldly substance by gaining popular applause. 1. *Money in itself is no evil*, for it has no moral character. It is only a blessing or a curse according to the use that is made of it. 2. "*The love of money is the root of all evil.*" It leads men to dishonour God, to ignore the claims of truth, to sacrifice the peace of the Church. The Pharisees in our Lord's time devoured widows' houses. How many people still sacrifice religion so far as they imagine it to conflict with their worldly advancement! 3. *The motive of these Cretan adversaries was baser than if it had been mere fanaticism or the love of proselytism.* (Matt. xxiii. 15.)

IV. THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE APOSTLE'S STRONG LANGUAGE CONCERNING THEM. "One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, idle gluttons." This testimony is true. These words refer not to "those of the circumcision," but to the inhabitants of Crete, who had generally welcomed the injurious teaching referred to. 1. *The apostle's quotation of a heathen poet, Epimenides, shows that it is not improper for Christians to study the literature of heathen nations.* Classical studies were once, on moral grounds, discouraged by the Church. Calvin says that nothing learned ought to be rejected, even though it should proceed from "the godless." 2. *The quotation is the unbiassed judgment of a Cretan poet, held in high honour for so-called prophetic gifts.* It represents the character of the Cretans in the darkest light, as if to justify a heathen proverb, "The three worst C's in the world are Cappadocia, Crete, and Cilicia." (1) "Cretans are always liars." This estimate is fully borne out by profane writers, as well as by the proverb that makes "Cretizing" synonymous with "deception." (2) They were "evil beasts." In allusion to their fierceness, their wildness, their cruelty. (3) They were "idle gluttons." They were sensual and slothful, corpulent and idle, and therefore fit disciples of teachers whose "god was their belly," and were content to eat the bread of others without working. 3. *The apostle endorses this heathen testimony, showing that the Cretans had not changed their national character in six hundred years.*

V. THE TRUE METHOD OF DEALING WITH THE CRETAN ADVERSARIES. "Whose mouths must be stopped." 1. *This does not warrant civil persecution.* 2. *It warrants the use of cogent arguments to silence gainsayers*, such as those by which our Lord silenced the Sadducees and the Pharisees, as well as the use of faithful and stringent discipline to repress ecclesiastical and moral disorders. The adversaries were to be opposed by reason, faithfulness, and love, above all, by the faithful preaching of the gospel in its positive as well as its negative aspects.—T. C.

Vers. 13, 14.—*The necessity of godly rebuke.* At this point the apostle drops the reference to bishops, and lays upon Titus himself the duty of applying the proper remedy.

I. THE UTILITY OF REBUKE. "Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith." The nature of the people demanded sharp treatment. "Sharpness and severity are but the other side of love itself, when the wounds can only be healed by cutting." Ministers are sent to give rebuke (Jer. xlv. 4; Micah iii. 8). 1. They may give it privately. 2. Or publicly (1 Tim. v. 20). 3. Fearlessly (Ezek. ii. 3-7). 4. With all authority (ch. ii. 15). 5. With long-suffering (2 Tim. iv. 2). 6. If sharply, yet with Christian love (2 Thess. iii. 15). 7. The good receive rebuke



(1) kindly (Ps. cxli. 5); (2) with love to those who administer it (Prov. ix. 8; xxiv. 25); (3) they attend to rebuke (Prov. xv. 5).

II. THE DESIGN OF THE REBUKE. "That they may be sound in the faith." It was: 1. *That they might be recovered from their errors, and receive sound doctrine, and use sound speech that cannot be condemned.* 2. *That they may be sound in the grace of faith, and manifest it by departing from their evil works.* This soundness of faith is described negatively by their "not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth." (1) Jewish fables. These are mentioned in 1 Tim. i. 4; iv. 7; 2 Tim. iv. 4. They were, no doubt, rabbinical, and ultimately crystallized into the Talmud. Our Lord condemned them (Matt. xv. 3). The traditional principle has, in spite of this warning, spread widely in the Church. We see it in the Latin Church, in the Greek Church, in Islamism. It is, in fact, the ruling principle of all these communities, which have no real love for the Scriptures. (2) The commandments of men. (a) They stand in antithesis to the commandments of God (Matt. xv. 9; Col. ii. 22). (b) They evidently were of a ceremonial character, and involved ascetic peculiarities, touching the question of abstinence from meats, and from other things created by God for man's enjoyment. (c) Their origin was evil, for they sprang from men turning away from the truth. It was not merely Mosaic prohibitions with regard to food that they enforced, but ascetic additions and exaggerations in the spirit of the later Gnosticism. The course of these men was downward. They were departing fast from the gospel.—T. C.

Ver. 15.—*A great counter-principle against this ascetic tendency.* "Unto the pure all things are pure: but to the defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled."

I. THE PRIVILEGES OF THE PURE. 1. *The pure are not those ceremonially pure,* but those (1) justified from all sin by Christ's righteousness; (2) clean through the Word spoken to them; (3) with hearts purified by faith; (4) with the graces of faith unfeigned, love without dissimulation, and hope without hypocrisy. 2. *Their privilege, purchased by the blood of Christ, was the lawful liberty of using all meats under the gospel which were forbidden by the ceremonial law.* (1) Jesus had taught that defilement comes from the heart, not from the shambles (Luke xi. 39—41). (2) The Church solemnly at Jerusalem decreed the abolition of this old distinction of meats (Acts xv.). 3. *The apostle elsewhere teaches the same truth.* "For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure, but it is evil for that man that eateth with offence" (Rom. xiv. 20). All meats are pure to the pure in heart. 4. *The distinction of meats among Roman Catholics tends to the neglect of the Divine Law altogether.* People on the Continent go to balls on the Lord's day who will feel their souls in danger from eating an egg on Friday. 5. *The saying of the apostle has an almost proverbial cast;* for it asserts that "all things"—that is, more than mere food—may have a purifying tendency in the case of the pure. Nothing is unclean of itself, but good, and to be received with thanksgiving (1 Tim. iv. 3—5).

II. THE MORAL RETRIBUTION OF THE IMPURE. It is that they pollute all they touch, and everything becomes the means of increasing their depravity. 1. *There is nothing impure or evil in creation;* it is in the mind and heart of men; these can turn the choicest gifts of God into the means of moral defilement. 2. *Unbelief is the fountain from which all the evil flows;* for to the "defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure." The worshippers may, by their distinctions of food, only foster pride and self-righteousness; but all alike springs from unbelief, which disregards the authority of the Word of God. 3. *The impurity is not merely external,* such as many dread, but internal; for it extends to "the mind and conscience," to the whole intellectual, volitional, and moral nature of man. Thus the last safeguard of the soul disappears, as the retribution upon man's neglect of God, truth, and purity. There is no longer a taste for the simple truth of the gospel, but a frightful facility for self-deception.—T. C.

Ver. 16.—*The great contradiction.* The apostle here describes their moral deficiency. "They confess that they know God, but in works they deny him."

I. THEY WERE MERE PROFESSORS OF RELIGION, POSSESSING ITS FORM BUT DENYING ITS POWER. 1. *Their knowledge of God was purely theoretical or speculative,* but they were

practical atheists. 2. *Hypocrites often profess great knowledge of God.* 3. *Even in apostolic times the communion of the Church was considerably mixed.* There is no trace of a pure Church anywhere on earth. The Church in Crete had unbelievers in its visible membership.

II. THEIR DENIAL OF GOD TOOK A MOST PRACTICAL SHAPE. Their conduct gave the lie to their profession. They were: 1. *Abominable* in the sight of God. They were morally abandoned. They were as hateful in the sight of God as the idols of the nations. 2. *Disobedient.* They were refractory and incorrigible, despising all order and repudiating obligation. 3. *Reprobate unto every good work.* They were as useless for the service of God as reprobate silver, which cannot bear the fire of the refiner. (1) They did no good works. (2) They had neither knowledge nor inclination to do good works. (3) Therefore they were quite useless in the service of God and man.—T. C.

Ver. 1.—*Christian ministry.* "A servant of God." One of the great revelations of the gospel is the dignity of service. "To be ministered unto" was the end of Roman ambition. Pride and precedence ruled supreme. The Jews sought to be "Herods;" the Gentiles sought for consulships and prætorships. Everywhere we see patrician selfishness in proud palaces, and, as a dark opposite, whole colonies of slaves. The words that fell from the lips of the Master were illustrated in his life: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

I. A SERVANT OF A STRONG MASTER. God! None can stand against him. In the end sin will reveal its weakness. It may storm and plot and fume against his will, but it is impotent at heart. "The Lord reigneth." The dominion of sin is undermined, and through the cross its leadership in the prince of this world is destroyed. Christ is "henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." He *must* reign!

II. A SERVANT OF A KIND MASTER. One who will not expect more service than we can render, and who knows and appreciates the *kind* of service we can render, and who will "reward every man according to his works." Kind in the *law* of service, which is a law of blessedness; causing it to be not a yokedom, but the joy of a child's freedom. "Blessed are they that do his will." Happiness never to be attained when sought as an *end*: is here found in the highway of duty.

III. A SERVANT OF A FAITHFUL MASTER. One who will stand by his servants in all times of disheartenment, obloquy, and difficulty. One who keeps his promises, so that they are all "Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus." Ever faithful to his holy trust. "Draw nigh unto God, and he will draw nigh unto you." Faithful to his vouchsafed protection. "Giving the angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." Faithful to the great Messianic promise, that to his Son "shall the gathering of the people be." Paul gloried in such a service, and he would have Titus know him by no higher name than "a servant of God."—W. M. S.

Ver. 1.—*Truth and life.* "The truth which is after godliness." This was to be "acknowledged" or obeyed. For truth is not a library for the leisurely, or a mine for the curious. It is the present truth—the practical truth; a truth that is always to be translated into life.

I. THIS IS A DIVINE TEST OF TRUTH. "After godliness." Like inspiration, it is *profitable for instruction in righteousness*. It is a seed whose preciousness is tested by the golden grain in its ripened ear. It does not produce a mere "pietism" or sentimental emotionalism; it produces godliness. Some are valiant for theoretical and doctrinal truths who bring forth no "fruit unto holiness." We are able to take the vantage-ground of Christian history, and to argue that there are no lives like Christian lives: that in this type of character are all the essentials of godliness—a life within, which cleanses the heart, energizes the will, quickens the conscience, elevates the taste, and purifies and sanctifies the life. This is the Divine test of truth: "By their fruits ye shall know them."

II. THIS IS A DIVINE MARK OF THE APOSTOLATE. Paul claims to be "an apostle of Christ, according to the faith of God's elect." He does not say that the evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, gave sacred and special commission to him; for

there is no record that they did. He does not claim, like Peter, to have been with Christ on the holy mount; or to have been with those disciples who were with Christ at his ascension, when "he led them out as far as to Bethany, and lifted up his hands and blessed them," or to have heard the command then given, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Nor does he rest his apostolate on anything ceremonial or formal alone. By the manifestation of the truth he commended himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. The truth of his message was one ground of authority; and the godliness of it another, and those two bases of authority—*truth and goodness*—are strong and eternal. None can shake the temple built on such granite foundations as these. Philosophies may change and councils may err, but these abide for ever. So Titus had to learn that his ministry was connected with a truth that must be *lived*, as well as a truth that must be *taught*.—W. M. S.

Ver. 2.—*The immortal hope*. "In hope of eternal life." How often these words have been inscribed over the resting-place of the dead! How restful they are! How such inscriptions in the dark catacombs tell of the new and blessed era that Christianity introduced! But it would be a mistake to connect them only with heaven. "This is life eternal," we read, "*to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*"

I. HOPE AND LIFE ARE HERE CONNECTED. It was *not* so in paganism. Men lost hope. They lived in and for the present day, and when tired of life committed suicide. Hope, such as the great Christian hope, brightens all human duties and joys. Life is real and earnest, all through the years. Age does not dim the brightness of the eye of the soul. So "we are saved by hope"—saved from *ennui*, disheartenment, and misery. We find Paul rejoicing in hope and patient in tribulation because of the life within, that was hid with Christ in God.

II. SERVICE IS ASSOCIATED WITH ETERNAL LIFE. Paul is a *servant* of God, and that service is quickened by faith and sustained by hope. The Christian teacher sees not only man in his fall and misery, but he sees the ideal man in him—one who may be re-created in Christ Jesus. The desert blossoms as the rose, as hope cheers the sower who plants the immortal seed of the kingdom in human hearts. The measure of our life is the measure of (1) the cheerfulness and (2) the continuance of our service. And what hope! It includes glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life.—W. M. S.

Ver. 2.—*The Divine veracity*. "God, who cannot lie." *Man* can lie. *Man* does lie. His word is not always his bond. He indulges in exaggeration. He tells half-truths, which are ever the worst of lies.

I. SOME THINGS GOD CANNOT DO. He who gave the moral Law embodies in himself that Law. He cannot do that which is untrue, unrighteous, unjust! "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent." This is our consolation in trouble. God is faithful, who hath promised—faithful in all that is exquisitely minute as well as all that is magnificently great. And in the wide sweep of the Divine promises we may find our rest in all times of tribulation. "All the promises of God in Him [in Christ] are Yea and Amen, to the glory of God the Father." He cannot lie.

II. SOME THINGS THAT WE TOO OFTEN DO. 1. *Carry our own cares*, because we will not trust our Father, and cast *all* our care on him. 2. *Recall our past sins*, and so torture our hearts with remembrance of them, when God has said that he has blotted them all out, and will remember them against us no more. 3. *Lose the bright vision of heaven*, and so become cast down in old age, forgetting that there can be no *suppressio veri*, or suppression of truth, with our Saviour. "I go to prepare a place for you; *if it were not so, I would have told you.*" This should be the rest of our hearts, if we have believed in Christ to the salvation of our souls. "We are in him that is *true*."—W. M. S.

Ver. 2.—*The Divine foresight*. "Before the world began." This is one of the glories of the gospel. It foresees all events in history, and provides for all the necessities of a being who is born to be redeemed.

I. THERE ARE NO AFTER-THOUGHTS WITH GOD. Our vision is imperfect. Our plans miscarry, because we have not taken in all aspects of the future. Sometimes our pro-

vision for that future is too limited; sometimes it is ill adapted, and we say, had we foreseen, we could have avoided disappointment, disaster, and defeat. All the future lies clearly before the omniscient gaze of God. "The Lamb was slain before the foundation of the world."

II. GOD'S PURPOSES ARE REVEALED IN HIS PROMISES. Not before the *earth* began, but before the *world* began—the world of busy men and women; the world of toil and strife, of sin and sorrow, and the developments of guilt and grief. Then it was that God declared that "the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head." This involves all. Sin would have involved *death*; but the eternal life which St. Paul speaks of here was the gift of God in the incarnate Saviour. "This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."—W. M. S.

Ver. 3.—*The Divine proclamation.* "But hath in due times manifested his Word through preaching, . . . according to the commandment of God our Saviour." The entire dispensation of Divine mercy from the earliest ages is a *manifestation*, or a "showing forth." This takes place in God's own way and in God's own time. We who are Christians now wait for "the manifestation of the sons of God."

I. THERE IS ALWAYS A DUE TIME. The clock of time is set to the order of Divine events. Generations give place to the age, and the age to the day, and the day to the hour. "Father, the hour is come." This was the fulness of time. Then the Romans had prepared the roads for the ambassadors of Christ to travel; and the Greeks had provided a perfect language for the written record of the revelation; and the dispersed Jews had circulated the Old Testament Scriptures, and had settled in foreign lands and planted synagogues; and Philosophy had confessed her failures in the opinion of her leaders, that there *must* be a Divine Deliverer, if deliverance comes at all; so that when men by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God in such a *fulness of time* to send forth his Son.

II. THERE WILL ALWAYS BE THE PREACHER. Truth, like the gospel, needs a loving heart and a living voice and a living experience to utter its sweet enchantments. It has pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save such as believe. That is to say, what the world calls foolishness. But men will always listen to and love the human voice when charged with truth and tenderness and pity. The press is doing a noble work, but it will not supplant the pulpit. Style changes, and methods change; but God "fashioneth their hearts alike." Dickens *spoke* his own works, and thousands flocked to hear. Carlyle and Emerson both acknowledge the mighty and immortal power of *speech*. A preaching which has intellect, conscience, and heart in it, and which is filled with the Spirit of Christ and the cross, will never become effete. It is God's own way, and his ways are higher than our ways.—W. M. S.

Ver. 4.—*Believed in everywhere.* "The common faith." Amid all diversities there is unity. In this sense we know that what is called "Catholic" authority rests on what was believed "always, everywhere, and by all." Theories of religion vary, but the great facts and doctrines are the things which cannot be shaken, and still remain. The word "faith" is sometimes used for that experience of the soul which we call trust, and as such is an inward reception of Christ and his cross; but it is also used, and is so used here, as descriptive of the gospel revelation itself.

I. THE APOSTLES DIE, BUT THE FAITH REMAINS. We are not disciples of Paul, or Barnabas, or Timothy, or Titus, but of *Christ*. These apostles did not draw men to *themselves*, but to *Christ*. They were, as Paul declares, "ministers by whom ye believed." To be in the true succession is to have the spirit of the apostles, and to hold the faith of the apostles. So far as the gospel has been perverted by mediæval superstition or the earlier traditions of the fathers, it is not the common faith. An inspired revelation of truth enables us in every age to preserve the common faith. As the philosophic Coleridge said, "It is evident that John and Paul held Christ to be Divine." The glorious gospel of the grace of God is preserved to us intact by the holy Gospels and the Epistles, and men true to the Bible harmonize in their acceptance of "the common faith."

II. THE LIFE OF THE TRUE CHURCH IS THE SAME IN EVERY AGE. The root must be the same, because the fruit is the same. First *truth* and then *life*. The cry for

forgiveness, and the peace that comes through the cross. The power of the atonement to crucify selfishness, and to lead men to live as not their own. The consciousness of human impotence, and of the might of the Holy Spirit in the inner man. All these are inward experiences of life, resulting from a common faith. Added to these are the experiences which attest life in conduct. We know the same artist's touch in the picture, the same sculptor's hand in the moulding of a figure, the same architect's design in the buildings; and we know Christians by the "life hid with Christ in God," producing those "fruits of the Spirit" which attest, in their beauty and their purity, the energy and the sanctity of the Divine life. It is "the common faith" which gives to Christians, in every land and every age, the same likeness to their Lord.—W. M. S.

Ver. 5.—*Apostolic preparation.* "Set in order the things that are wanting." Christian life is destined for development and for continuance. To this end the Church is to be the centre alike of evangelistic effort and of Christian culture. Here is—

I. THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE ECCLESIA, OR THE "CHURCH." "And ordain elders in every city." The New Testament gives no sanction to the idea that an *unorganized* Christianity is the simplest and the best. The precedents of the early Christian Church were to be faithfully adhered to. Whether the organization of the Church was to be a growth conditioned by the circumstance of every age, is a question we do not here discuss; but that there was to be organization is here settled for ever. The expression, "in every city," shows that the life of the Church was not to be spasmodic, but settled.

II. THERE MUST BE LIFE AS WELL AS ORGANIZATION. This, too, is manifest here. Christians were enjoying "grace, mercy, and peace;" were "renewed in the spirit of their minds." Divine life comes from faith in Christ alone, and is not dependent upon aught else. The declaration of Paul is there always and everywhere, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." We are, therefore, to recognize the fruits of the Spirit everywhere, whether the gardens in which they grow be according to our plan and ideal or no. But as all Christian life needs constant care and discipline, as the disciple needs teaching, and the justified need sanctification, so there was to be the "setting in order" of all that we mean by the organized Christian Church; not that every detail is to be binding, or to be reproduced by every Church in every age.—W. M. S.

Vers. 7—9.—*The overseers.* "For a bishop," etc. Here we have the moral qualification necessary for an overseer or bishop of the Churches. These bishops were to be an order by themselves, not, as Baxter would have them, "Primus inter pares," or "first among equals." Each overseer who was naturally placed in a leading city ought, from his prominence as overseer of the district, to be a ministerial example to his brethren. The practical counsels here given apply equally to all aspects of the "overseer," or bishop.

I. THE BISHOP AT HOME. Polygamy was so widespread that it could not be arrested and done away with at once. But the bishops, as leaders of men, were to set the example. Polygamy, like slavery, was to be destroyed by the influence of the cross—by the crucifixion of human selfishness, and the realization of God's ideals in the dignity of woman and in the sacredness of human life. "Having faithful children," to whom "riot," or the indulgence of unruly appetites and habits, was unknown.

II. THE BISHOP AS A STEWARD. Having elevated position and large opportunity for good. We must remember that *character* makes the good steward, not *ex-cathedra* commands and exhortations. "Not self-willed;" but remembering that the measure of his power is to be the measure of his humility. "Not soon angry;" for if there be no self-repression, if the volcanic fires of the heart be not subdued, it will be of no use for him to preach about the cross which crucifies self. "Not given to wine;" for intemperance bereaves a man alike of reason and of religion. "No striker;" for although the Romans of that day used their power over slaves and dependents by buffeting them, and sometimes killing them, the servant of Christ must be gentle unto all men. "Not given to filthy lucre;" for covetousness kills other virtues, and draws by its tap-root all nourishment from the plants of grace.

III. THE BISHOP AS A BROTHER. "A lover of hospitality." Remembering how many would like to share his counsels, to walk in the light of his influence, and to be refreshed

by his sympathies. "A lover of *good men*." Not *great* men, merely as men of *genius and power*; but men whose hearts were true and pure. "Sober, just, holy, temperate"—a "city that lieth four-square."

IV. THE BISHOP AS A TEACHER. Not indulging in novelties or new philosophies. Not a creator of truth, but a teacher of it, remembering that he is a trustee of truth. "Holding fast the faithful Word as he hath been taught."

Finally, we see that all was not so harmonious and peaceful even in the early Church; for the bishop is to exhort and convince the gainsayers, which show that he must be "able" as well as "good."—W. M. S.

Ver. 15.—*Pure-heartedness*. "Unto the pure all things are pure." The gospel centres morality as well as religion in the heart. Men of corrupt tastes cannot have correct morals, because a man may sin against himself as well as against society. An impure heart makes an impure world of its own within; and that, if it hurts none else, hurts the man himself, wrongs his own soul. Here we see that the eye sees what it wishes to see, or what the inward taste desires to see. A pure man does not understand the *double entendre*; does not see the vision of evil beneath the veil of words or the disguise of art.

I. THE FIRST REQUIREMENT. "A pure heart." Make the tree good. A bad man will find impure suggestion anywhere and everywhere—even in religious literature, even in the unsuspecting words of holy men—for his heart is not renewed. So possible is it for men to find evil even in things good.

II. THE GREAT SAFEGUARD. "All things are pure." There is no false delicacy. No prudery, no affectation. In meditation or conversation they catch no stain of defilement from the subjects they are mentally brought into contact with. Their safety is from *within*; for "out of the heart are the issues of life."—W. M. S.

Ver. 15.—*Inner defilement*. "But unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled." This is the worst Nemesis of evil; it hurts the man. We can injure the physical senses—the eye, the ear; so we can injure the mind and the moral senses.

I. THE DESCRIPTION OF CHARACTER. Why this couplet? "Defiled and unbelieving" seems at first a strange combination of ideas. Not so. To defile is to march off—to file away from. So men leave the King's highway of holiness, purity, truth, and righteousness; and they do this because they are unbelieving. They will not accept the revelation of God, that sin is loss, shame, misery, death; and that holiness is happiness and life eternal.

II. THE DREAD ISSUE. Nothing is pure. All waters take the colour of the soil over which they pass. The stained windows make a stained light. An impure heart colours everything—thought, imagination, observation, conversation, and common life. And this is the doom! Their mind and conscience are defiled. They feel it. They know it, and at times they confess it. Many shrink from themselves who have never had resolution to seek him who can "create a clean heart and renew a right spirit within them."—W. M. S.

Vers. 1-4.—*Redemptive truth*. "Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ," etc. These words direct our attention to certain phases of redemptive truth. The *substratum* of the gospel is not merely truth, but *redemptive* truth. Truth, not merely to enlighten the intellect and to discipline the mental faculties, but to raise the human soul from spiritual ignorance to intelligence, from spiritual bondage to liberty, from selfishness to benevolence, from materialism to spirituality, from the "prince of darkness" to the true and living God. Here it appears—

I. AS A GRAND ENTERPRISE. 1. An enterprise *devoted to the highest purpose*. What is the purpose? It is here described: (1) As the promotion of the *faith* of God's elect. "According to the faith of God's elect." The idea is, perhaps, the furtherance of true faith amongst those to whom God had, in the exercise of his sovereignty, sent the gospel. As a fact, all men have not had the opportunity of receiving the gospel; indeed, only an insignificant fraction of the race have had it brought to them. This fraction is a class so highly privileged that they may be designated the "elect." Why should

they have the gospel sent to them, and not others? Ask why some should inherit health, others disease; some wealth, others poverty; some intellectual powers of a high order, others minds but little removed from brute intelligence. "All these worketh the selfsame Spirit, devising to every man severally as he will." Now, to further and promote faith among those to whom the gospel goes is one of its grand purposes. (2) As the promotion of the knowledge "of the truth which is after [according to] godliness." More accurately rendered, "The knowledge of the truth which is beside, or which leadeth to godliness" (Ellicott). The grand purpose here indicated seems to be that all who are divinely favoured with the gospel should so believe it, and practise it, that they may become godly in their lives. What a sublime design is this, to make men God-like! Or, as it is expressed in the next chapter, "The grace of God hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." 2. *An enterprise employing the highest human agency.* "Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ." "Paul's mode of designating himself here," says Dr. Fairbairn, "does not exactly coincide with his form of expression in any other Epistle. Elsewhere he calls himself a servant, a bondman of Christ (Rom. i. 1; Gal. i. 10; Phil. i. 1; Col. iv. 12), but here only of God. A noteworthy variation, not on its own account, but as a mark of genuineness; for it is impossible to conceive what motive could have induced any imitator to depart in such a manner from the apostle's usual phraseology. The *de* coupling his calling as an apostle of Christ with his relation to God as a servant, cannot be taken in an adversative sense, for there is really no opposition; but it is used, as not unfrequently, to subjoin something new, different and distinct from what precedes, though not strictly opposed to it." Paul was one of the greatest of men. In natural endowments, penetrating insight, vigour of thought, logical force, and rhetorical aptitude, he had in his age but few equals. His acquirements, too, were great. Brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, acquainted with Grecian culture, and master of rabbinic law, he could stand side by side with the greatest reasoners, sages, and orators of his time. But, beyond all this, he was specially called and qualified by God for propagating the gospel of his Son. There is no enterprise on this earth demanding a higher kind of human agency than the gospel, nor (notwithstanding the mental feebleness and the moral meanness of the thousands in every age who have worked, and are working, in connection with it) can there be found a higher class of men, both intellectual and moral, than some who have been, and still are, employed in inducting men with the truths of the gospel.

II. AS A TRANSCENDENT PROMISE. "In hope of eternal life, which God, that [who] cannot lie, promised before the world began [times eternal]." This promise is: 1. *Transcendent in value.* "Eternal life." This means something more than an endless existence. An interminable existence might be an interminable curse. It means not only an existence without end, but an existence without *evil*, without sin, error, sorrow, misery. Ay, and more than this, an endless existence in connection with *good*, and with good only, with knowledge, holiness, liberty, and companionship with the best created spirits, and with the great God himself. Eternal life is eternal goodness. 2. *Transcendent in certitude.* It is made by God, "that cannot lie." Are not all things possible with him? Yes, in what may be called a *physical* sense. It is possible for him to destroy, in the twinkling of an eye, the present creation, and to produce a new one. But, in a *moral* sense, there is an impotency: His "cannot" here is his will not, and his "will not" is his glory. A higher eulogy you cannot pronounce on any man than to say he cannot be ungenerous, he cannot be false, he cannot be unjust, he cannot be dishonourable. Inability to do wrong is the glory of the Infinite. This promise, then, cannot fail; it must be realized. "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away." 3. *Transcendent in age.* "Promised before the world began [times eternal]." When was that? Before the foundation of the earth was laid, or the wheels of time began their revolutions. When he occupied the boundlessness of immensity alone. The gospel is an old promise: the Lamb was slain "before the foundation of the world." The gospel is not a threat, but a promise.

III. AS A GRADUAL REVELATION. "But hath in due times [in his own seasons] manifested his Word through preaching, [in the message] which is committed unto me [wherewith I was entrusted] according to the commandment of God our Saviour."

There are three thoughts here suggested concerning the revelation of this promise of eternal life. 1. *It was manifested at a proper time.* "In due times [in his own seasons] manifested his Word." God has a season for everything, everything in the material and the moral. Nothing but sin appears in his universe that does not come "according to his time." Oceans ebb and flow, planets perform their revolutions, kingdoms rise and fall, generations come and go "according to his time." He had a time for the revelation of his redemptive truth, and when the time dawned it beamed on the world. 2. *It was manifested by apostolic preaching.* "Through preaching." Redemptive truth came into the world through man, and it is Heaven's design that it should be propagated through the world by man. It is to be preached, not only with the lips, but by the life. The true preacher must incarnate it. His life must illustrate and confirm the doctrine that his lips declare. It was before the gospel came to men in written documents that it won its greatest victories. Some think that too much importance is attached to the Bible in this work, and that it is vain to expect that the circulation of the Scriptures will answer the end. History shows it has not done so, and the philosophy of the work explains the reason; hence it must be revealed in the voice and the life. 3. *It was manifested by the Divine command.* "Which was committed unto me [wherewith I was entrusted] according to the commandment of God our Saviour." The Divine command came to the apostle to preach the gospel at various times—came to him on the road to Damascus, came to him in the temple at Jerusalem, came to him in the ship on the Adriatic. Yes; the Divine command comes to all: "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel." Not only was it by command that Paul preached to mankind, but now to Titus.

IV. AS A LOVE-BEGGETTING POWER. "To Titus, mine own son [my true child] after the common faith." "Mine own son." What an endearing expression! The gospel converter becomes the father in the highest and divinest sense of the converted. No relation so close, vital, and tender as the spiritual relation of souls. Paul's desire is, for Titus, "Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour." Here is the wish of heavenly philanthropy, a philanthropy that embraces the complete and everlasting well-being of its object. Having the "grace, peace, and mercy" of God, we have everything we require; we have "all and abound."

CONCLUSION. Prize this redemptive truth, practise this redemptive truth, preach this redemptive truth. It is the "power of God unto salvation."—D. T.

Vers. 5—9.—*Church order.* "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting," etc. Titus was now at Crete. "Crete, over whose Christian population Titus had been placed by Paul, was a well-known, large, and populous island in the Mediterranean. It lies geographically further south than any of the European islands, and, roughly speaking, almost at an equal distance from each of the three Old World continents, Europe, Asia, Africa. We identify it with the Caphtor of the Old Testament (Deut. ii. 23; Jer. xlvii. 4; Amos ix. 7). In modern times it is known by us as Candia. Very early it was the scene of an advanced civilization. In the 'Odyssey' it is mentioned as possessing ninety cities; in the 'Iliad' as many as one hundred. Metullus added it, B.C. 69, to the Roman dominion. In the days of Augustus it was united into one province with Cyrene. It abounded with Jews of wealth and influence; this we learn from the testimony of Philo and of Josephus. It probably received the gospel from some of those of Crete who, we are expressly told, were present when the Spirit was poured on the apostles on the first Pentecost after the Resurrection (Acts ii. 11). The apparently flourishing state of Christianity on the island at this time was in great measure, no doubt, owing to the residence and labours among them of the Apostle St. Paul, whose work appears to have been mainly directed to preaching the gospel, and to increasing the number of the converts, which, from the wording of ver. 5, was evidently very great, elders being required in every city." The following thoughts are deducible from these words.

I. THAT IN EVERY CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY THERE SHOULD BE THE MAINTENANCE OF ORDER. "Thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting." "The words," says Dean Spence, "explain the cause of Titus's appointment in Crete. The 'things that are wanting' were what Paul meant, no doubt, to have done himself, but was prevented by being hurried away; for him the end was nigh at hand. These 'things'

were want of Church officials, lack of Church government, want of cohesion between the Churches of the island; in a word, there was plenty of Christian life, but no Christian organization as yet in Crete. It was rather a number of Christian brotherhoods than one." "Set in order." God is the God of order, as witnessed in the harmonious operations of nature. Disorder, both in the mental and moral domains, is abnormal and pernicious; it implies furthermore a deviation from the established law of Almighty love. A disordered body is diseased, so is a disordered soul. A disordered family lacks the condition both of peace and prosperity. A disordered Church, for many reasons, is the greatest of all evils. Confusion in a Church is a calumny of Christ, and obstructive at once to its peace, power, prosperity, and usefulness. "Order," says Southey, "is the sanity of the mind, the health of the body, the peace of the city, the security of the state. As the beams to a house, as the bones to the microcosm of man, so is order to all things."

II. THAT THE MAINTENANCE OF CHURCH ORDER MAY REQUIRE THE MINISTRY OF SPECIAL SUPERINTENDENTS. The words "elder," "bishop," "pastor," etc., all refer to the same office, and that office means "superintendent," or "overseer." "These presbyters were to be most carefully selected, according to the instructions Titus must remember Paul had given him on some previous occasion." There was to be some one to overlook all. Such a one is to maintain order, not by legislating but by loving; not by the assumption of authority, but by a humble devotion to the spiritual interests of all. The ministry of such a man is needed because of the many elements of discord that exist, even in the best communities, such as temper, self-will, pride, etc.

III. THAT THE SUPERINTENDENTS SHOULD BE MEN OF DISTINGUISHED EXCELLENCE. "Blameless," etc. The highest offices in Church and state should always be filled by the highest characters. The morally small man, elevated to a high office, is an incongruity and a curse; and yet how common is such a sight! Moral serfs on thrones, moral rogues on the bench, moral sycophants in the ecclesiastical world! Here Paul denotes the style of men required to superintend the Church. "If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly," etc. "The expressions," says Dr. Fairbairn, "indicate one possessed of that prudence and self-control, that uprightness of character, that kind, generous, disinterested, gracious disposition, which were fitted to command the respect and secure the confidence and affection of a Christian community—one altogether such as might serve for a pattern to a flock over whom he was appointed to preside, and guide their affairs with discretion." The qualifications of this office are here given in: 1. A *negative* form. "Not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre." 2. A *positive* form. "The husband of one wife, having faithful children, a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate, holding fast the faithful Word as he hath been taught."—D. T.

Vers. 10—14.—*The sins of the sect and the sins of the tribe.* "For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision," etc. In the preceding verses Paul stated one purpose for which he left Titus in Crete, viz. to set in order "the things that are wanting," and to ordain elders in every city. He recognized at once, not only the importance of order in the new community, but also the importance of appointing men who, intellectually and morally, were qualified for its establishment and continuance. In these verses he gives Titus directions as to his aggressive work in Crete. He was to do battle with sin. "For there are many unruly [men] and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert [overthrow] whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." The great work of the *gospel minister is to do battle with sin*. In the text, sin is referred to as appearing in two aspects, in *religious sect* and in *national character*.

I. IN RELIGIOUS SECT. "Specially they of the circumcision." These, undoubtedly, are Judaizing Christians, men who pretended to be converted to Christianity, men who sought not only to mingle Judaic elements with the new religion, but to inculcate and disseminate it in that form. Observe the description of sin as it appeared in this religious sect—these men of the circumcision. Here is: 1. *Factiousness*. "Unruly." Not only would they not bow to the established order of the Church, but not to the

spirit and principles of the new religion. They would not yield to the masterhood of Christ, the Author and Substance of the gospel; they were self-willed. They would have a sect of their own. 2. *Ostentation*. "Vain talkers." Vain, not merely in the sense of proud, but in the sense of emptiness. In truth, as a rule, the emptiest men, intellectually, are at once the most conceited and loquacious. They talk, not for the edification of others, but for the gratification of themselves. Their fluency, whilst it wins the admiration of fools, deludes the ignorant, and disgusts the thoughtful. 3. *Falsehood*. "Deceivers." All merely nominal Christians are deceivers. They practically misrepresent the doctrines they profess to hold. 4. *Mischievousness*. "Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert [overthrow] whole houses." "The translation should run, 'seeing they subvert,' etc. There was, indeed, grave cause why these men should be put to silence: the mischief they were doing in Crete to the Christian cause was incalculable. It was no longer individuals that their poisonous teaching affected, but they were undermining the faith of whole families. For an example how Titus and his presbyters were to stop the mouths of these teachers of what was false, comp. Matt. xxii. 34—46, where the Lord, by his wise, powerful, yet gentle words, first put the Sadducees to silence, and then so answered the Pharisees 'that neither durst any man from that day ask him any more questions'" (Dr. Ellicott). 5. *Greed*. "Teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." All the speeches they made, all the influence they exerted, sprang from sordid motives. Sin has a thousand branches and but one root, and that root is selfishness. How many, in what we call the religious world, are found teaching things which they ought not, for "filthy lucre's sake"—things that gratify popular taste, that agree with popular prejudice, chime in with the popular thought! All this to fill their pews and to enrich their coffers. Now, these sins which are discovered in the religious sect are prevalent outside of all religions; but they receive a peculiar colour, shape, enormity, and mischievousness when we find them in the religious realm. The devil is less hideous amongst his fellows in hell than he is amongst the sons of God. Hence, to do battle with sin in these religious forms is the grand work of a true preacher; and truly, in this age, and here in England, he will find these sins on every hand. He will see *factiousness* building up sects, and little sects within sects; *ostentation*—vain speaking, braggardism, sometimes cooing and sometimes bawling, everywhere; *falsehood*—rogues robbing themselves in the garb of sainthood, wolves in sheep's clothing; *mischievousness*—by their empty words and pernicious example subverting "whole houses," filling the domestic air with poisonous cant; *greed*—the gospel itself made a trade, and vested interests created in connection with doctrines and doings antagonistic to the life and spirit of him whom they call Master. Ah me! conventional religion is a calumny on the religion of Christ. Never was a Luther wanted in Christendom more than now. He is wanted to substitute the pure gospel of Christ for the denominationalized gospel.

II. IN NATIONAL CHARACTER. "One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretans are alway liars, evil beasts, slow bellies [idle gluttons]." There are three sins mentioned here which seem to have prevailed amongst the Cretans as a race. 1. *Lying*. "The Cretans are alway liars." Who made this charge against the Cretans? Paul says, "One of themselves, even a prophet of their own." The quotation is from a poem on 'Oracles,' by Epimenides, of Phœstus, who flourished B.C. 600, lived to the age of a hundred and fifty, and was supposed to have been a sleeper in a cave for fifty-seven years. He appears to have deserved the title prophet in the fullest sense. Plato speaks of him as a Divine man. The Cretans were characterized by the sin of lying—"alway liars." This expression was quoted by Callimachus in his 'Hymn to Zeus,' and well known in antiquity. "The very word 'to Cretize' (*Kretizein*), or to play the part of a Cretan, was invented as a word synonymous with 'to deceive,' 'to utter a lie;' just as *Corinthizein*, 'to play the part of a Corinthian,' signified 'to commit a still darker moral offence.' Some writers suggest that this despicable vice of lying was received as a bequest from the early Phœnician colonists." 2. *Sensuality*. "Evil beasts." Not only liars, but gross and sensual, living in animalism and for it. All men may be called "beasts" who attend to their animal appetites as means of gratification rather than of relief. He who seeks happiness from his senses rather than from his soul is a beast; he who seeks it from without rather than from within is not better than a beast. The happiness of a true man cannot stream into him from without; it

must well up from the depths of his own high thinkings and pure affections. *Gluttony*. "Slow bellies [idle gluttons]." Their gluttony made them dull, heavy, and indolent. Such are what may be called tribal or national sins. They were not confined to the Cretans, but for them the Cretans were notorious. These are *national*. But are these sins extinct in England? Have we no lying here? Our social air is impregnated with falsehood. Have we no sensuality and gluttony? Yes, alas! tens of thousands are every day pampering themselves with luxuries, whilst millions are being starved to death. Here, then, are common sins with which the preacher has to do battle. He has to "rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith."

CONCLUSION. A true preacher, then, has no easy task. He has to wage fierce battle with the sins that are around him—the *sins of the sect* and the *sins of the tribe*. He is not to pander to men's tastes, nor to battle with mere opinions and theories, but with *sins*; he must "resist unto blood, striving against sin." "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."—D. T.

Vers. 15, 16.—*The supreme importance of moral character.* "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure," etc. We notice, at the outset, two facts suggested by the passage. 1. *That there is an essential difference in the moral characters of men.* There are some "pure" and some "defiled," some holy and some unholy. What is the underlying inspiring principle that makes this difference? *The predominant disposition.* Perhaps there is no moral being in the universe who is not under the masterhood of some *one* sentiment or passion, to which can be traced, as to a mainspring, all the motions of his being. This controlling tendency is the moral monarch of souls, or, in Scripture language, is the moral "heart of the man." This supreme disposition exists in all men in two distinct and opposite forms, either in sympathy with the true, the right, and the spiritual, or in sympathy with the false, the wrong, and the material. That soul alone is *pure* whose governing sympathy is God and the true. Supreme love for the supremely good is the true life of the soul, and the fountain of all its virtues. He whose controlling sympathies run not thus, is impure and corrupt. 2. *That the outward world is to men according to this difference.* The whole external universe is to a man according to the moral state of his soul. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he"—so is he in relation to himself, to all without, and to God. This being so, the text teaches *the supreme importance of moral character.* Let us look at—

I. **THE MORALLY PURE IN RELATION TO ALL THINGS.** "Unto the pure all things are pure." This is true in relation to three things. 1. In relation to *appearance*. The proverb goes that the greatest rogues are ever the most suspicious. A thoroughly selfish, ungodly soul will see but little good even in the best men. It is a law that man judges his fellow by himself, and the more corrupt a man is, the more severe his judgment on others. A good man is neither given to suspicion nor censoriousness; he sees some good in all men. 2. In relation to *influence*. The influence of all outward things upon men is dependent on their moral character. Our Lord says, "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man, but that which cometh out of the mouth defileth a man." The moral character is an all-transformative power in the centre of man's being. It turns the unclean into the clean, and the reverse. A good man, like the bee, can extract honey from the bitterest plant; or, like the Æolian harp, can turn the shrieking wind into music. 3. In relation to *appropriation*. As the body lives by appropriating the outward, so does the soul; and as the effects of the appropriation, whether universal or otherwise, depend on the condition of the body's health, as the appropriation of a diseased body only increases the physical ailment; so with the soul. A corrupt soul appropriates, even from the most strengthening and refreshing means of spiritual improvement, that which weakens and destroys. Pharaoh and his host got moral mischief out of the ministry of Moses; and the men of Capernaum were pressed into a deeper and darker hell through the elevating and enlightening ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. Mark, then, the supreme importance of moral character.

II. **THE MORALLY DEFILED IN RELATION TO ALL THINGS.** "Unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled." Here is the converse. Mark, in passing, three things. 1. *The sphere of the defilement.* "The mind and conscience." "The mind," says a modern expositor, "is the willing as

well as the thinking part of man, as it has been well defined the human spirit (*pneuma*) in one of its aspects, not simply *quatenus cogitat, et intelligit*, but also *quatenus vult*. Defilement of this mind (*nous*) means that the thoughts, wishes, purposes, activities, are all stained and debased. The second of these, the conscience (*syneidesis*), is the moral consciousness within, and that which is ever bringing up the memory of the past, with its omissions and commissions, its errors, its cruel, heartless unkindness, its selfish disregard of others. When this is defiled, then this last safeguard of the soul is broken down. The man and woman of the defiled conscience is self-satisfied, hard, impenitent to the last. Every part and faculty of the soul is stained with sin. The body may be cleansed by ceremonial ablutions, and the external manners and speech kept pure by culture and civilization, but the soul be black; the outside of the "cup and of the platter clean," but inside full of corruption. 2. *The cause of the defilement.* "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him." There is nothing, perhaps, so morally defiling to the soul as religious hypocrisy. The man who with the lip professes to know God, and who in the life denies him, gets deeper stains upon his soul than the agnostic who professes that he knows nothing about him. What millions in our churches every Sunday publicly, at each service, avow with their lip their belief in God, but in their week-day life "he is not in all their thoughts"! Thus souls get deeply dyed in corruption in Christian churches. 3. *The hideousness of the defilement.* "Being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." However fair their conduct in the religious observances, they are "abominable" within, hideous to the eye of God. However rigorous in their observances and religious ordinances, they are "disobedient" in heart, they outrage moral laws; however useful they regard themselves and appear to others, they are "reprobate," they are rejected and worthless. These "defiled" in soul defile everything without; all outward things in their appearance, influences, and appropriation are to them corrupt.

CONCLUSION. Mark: 1. *The natural sovereignty of the human soul.* We are not necessarily the creatures of the outward; we have within the power to bend circumstances to our will, to get good out of evil, to turn outward dissonance into music, deformity into beauty, poison into nourishment. Let us adore our Maker for this wonderful endowment—an endowment which guards us from the coercion of outward forces, secures to us an inward freedom of action, and enables us to put all outward things in subjection to our own spiritual selves. 2. *The dependency of the soul's destiny on itself.* A man's destiny depends upon his moral character, and his character depends upon himself. As food, however nutritious, cannot administer strength to a man's body without the digestive and appropriative power, so no external influences, however good and useful in themselves, can raise a man's soul without the right action of its faculties. Man cannot be made good. His body may be borne to the summit of a lofty mountain without the use of his limbs, but if his soul is to ascend "the holy hill of the Lord," he must climb it every inch himself. Fortune or patronage may raise him to some eminent social position, but he cannot reach a single stage of moral dignity—the true dignity of man—apart from his own earnest endeavours. The transformative power of the soul is to external circumstances what the builder is to the materials out of which he rears his edifice. The choicest materials may be brought together—gold, marble, and cedar—but unless the builder use them with artistic skill they will never take the form of a beautiful structure. So the providence of God may gather around man all the facilities and elements for the raising of a noble character, but unless he use them with his own spiritual hand, he will never produce such a structure. 3. *The grand end of true teaching.* What is that? The supreme importance of every man obtaining a true moral character. "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." In moral goodness of soul alone, can we not only find our heaven, but find our way safely and happily through this life. We live in a world of evil. We cannot escape its sinful influence by endeavouring, like the anchorite, to avoid its touch. Whilst no man should put himself in the way of temptation, no man should be afraid to confront evil, to go into its most malarial regions if duty call. In truth, if man's well-being depended upon escaping outward evil, it could never be realized, because to live in the world he is bound to live in its midst, and evil must stream into him every day. How, then, is he to reach a blessed destiny? Not merely by endeavouring to frame his life according to the outward rules of morality and religion, but by a right use

of his own spiritual powers. There is a power in the body, when in a healthy state, to appropriate whatever goes into it from external nature that is wholesome and necessary, and to expel that which is noxious and superfluous. The soul has a power analogous to this; a power to appropriate the wholesome and to expel the injurious. This power we call the transformative. Let us use it rightly—use it as Noah used it, who, amidst the blasphemy and ridicule of a corrupt generation, walked with God, and fulfilled a noble destiny; as Paul used it at sceptical Athens, in dissolute Corinth, and in pagan Rome, who from experience left the world this testimony: “All things work together for good to them that love God.”—D. T.

EXPOSITION.

CHAPTER II.

Ver. 1.—*Befit for become, A.V.; the sound for sound, A.V. But speak thou, etc.* The apostle now brings out, in full contrast with the vain talk of the heretical teachers, the solid, sober teaching of a true man of God, in harmony with the sound doctrine of the gospel of Christ. The sound doctrine (*τῇ ὑγιανοῦσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ*); as in 1 Tim. i. 10 (where see note). In 1 Tim. vi. 1 *ἡ διδασκαλία* by itself means “the Christian faith,” “the doctrine of the gospel.” The varying phrases, *ἡ καλὴ διδασκαλία*, *ἡ κατ’ εὐσεβείαν διδασκαλία*, and *ἡ ὑγιανοῦσα διδασκαλία*, all mean the same thing, with varying descriptive qualifications (see ver. 10). The article “the” is not required.

Ver. 2.—*Aged for the aged, A.V.; temperate for sober, A.V.; sober-minded for temperate, A.V.; love for charity, A.V. Temperate (νῆφελος);* as 1 Tim. iii. 2 (where see note). *Grave (σεμνός);* as 1 Tim. iii. 8, 11 (see too 1 Tim. ii. 2; iii. 4). *Sober-minded (σώφρωνας);* as ch. i. 8, note. *Sound (ὕγιανον-τας);* see ver. 1, note, and ch. i. 13, where, as here, the word is applied to persons, as it is in its literal sense in 3 John 2. *Faith, . . . love, . . . patience.* We have the same triad in 1 Tim. vi. 11. In 1 Cor. xiii. 13 we find “faith, hope, love.” In 1 Thess. i. 3 the apostle joins “work of faith, labour of love,” and “patience of hope,” which last phrase seems almost to identify *patience* and *hope* (comp. too Rom. viii. 25; xv. 4). We must not miss the important warning, not only to have some kind of faith, love, and patience, but to be healthy and vigorous in our faith, love, and patience. There is a puny faith, a sickly love, and a misdirected patience.

Ver. 3.—*That for the, A.V.; be reverent in demeanour for that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, A.V.; slanderers for false accusers, A.V.; nor for not, A.V.; enslaved for given, A.V.; that which is good for good things, A.V. Reverent (σεπόμεναι);* only here in the New Testament, twice in 4 Maccabees (in ix. 25, where the eldest of the seven brothers who suffered martyrdom under Antiochus Epiphanes is called *ὁ σεπο-*

μεντής: *reveras*; and in xi. 20, where it is coupled with *αἰών*,¹ “age,” or “generation”); it is not uncommon in classical Greek. The word means “becoming a holy person, place, or matter;” otherwise expressed in 1 Tim. ii. 10, “which becometh women professing godliness;” and Eph. v. 3, “as becometh saints.” In *demeanour* (*ἐν καταστάματι*; of much wider meaning than *καταστολή* in 1 Tim. ii. 7); here only in the New Testament, once in 3 Macc. v. 45, “a state” or “condition,” spoken of elephants; and so in classical Greek, applied to a man, to health, to the air, or the body politic. Here *mien*, *demeanour*, or *deportment*, including, as St. Jerome expounds it, the movements of the body, the expression of the countenance, what is said, and what is left unsaid. The whole habit and composition or structure of mind and body is to be *σεπόμενες*, what becomes a holy woman. *Slanderers* (*διαβόλους*); as 1 Tim. iii. (*q.v.*). *Nor enslaved to much wine* (comp. 1 Tim. iii. 8). Observe the fitness of the phrase “enslaved.” The drunkard is thoroughly the *slave* of his vicious appetite (comp. ch. iii. 3; Rom. vi. 16; 2 Pet. ii. 19). *Teachers of that which is good* (*καλοδιδασκάλους*); only here in the New Testament, not found in the LXX., or in classical Greek; teachers, by their holy demeanour as well as by their words. For as Ignatius (quoted by Ellicott) says of the Bishop of the Trallians, “His very demeanour (*αὐτὸ τὸ κατὰ στήνα*) was a great lesson (*μοθητεία*).”

Ver. 4.—*Train for teach . . . to be sober, A.V. Train (σφρονοῦσιν)*; only here in the New Testament, not found in the LXX., but common in classical Greek in the sense of to “correct,” “control,” or “moderate,” which is its meaning here. Ellicott renders it “school” (comp. 1 Tim. v. 14). The A.V. “teach to be sober” is manifestly wrong. *To love their husbands* (*φιλόνηδους εἶναι*); here only in the New Testament, not found in the LXX., but occasionally, in this sense, in classical Greek. *To love their*

¹ But *παύση* and more probable reading is *ἀγών*, conflict, struggle.

children (φιλοτέκνους); here only in the New Testament, not found in the LXX. except in 4 Macc. xv. 4, but not uncommon in classical Greek.

Ver. 5.—*Sober-minded* for *discreet*, A.V.; *workers for keepers*, A.V. and T.R.; *kind for good*, A.V.; *being in subjection for obedient*, A.V. *Sober-minded* (σάφρονας); as in ver. 2 and ch. i. 8; 1 Tim. iii. 2. "Discreet" is nearer the sense than "sober-minded." Perhaps the French *sage* is nearer still. *Workers at home* (οικοουργός, for the T.R. οἰκουρούς). Neither word occurs elsewhere in the New Testament or in the LXX., nor does οἰκουργός in classical Greek. But οἰκουρός, which is probably the true reading (Huther), is common in good classical Greek for "stayers at home." It is derived from οἶκος and οὐρος, a "keeper." *Kind* (ἀγαθός). The idea of *kindness* or *good nature* seems to be the side of goodness here intended; as we say, "He was very good to me" (so Matt. xx. 15 and 1 Pet. ii. 18). *Kindness* is the leading idea in ἀγαθός. *Obedient* (ὑποτασσόμενος). These identical words occur in 1 Pet. iii. 1 (see too Eph. v. 22; Col. iii. 18). That the Word of God be not blasphemed (see 1 Tim. vi. 1). St. Paul complains that the Name of God was blasphemed among the Gentiles on account of the evil deeds of the Jews (Rom. ii. 24; see Ezek. xxxvi. 20—23). Our Lord, on the other hand, exhorts that Christians, by their good works, should lead men to glorify their Father which is in heaven. The passage before us shows how much the honour of Christianity is bound up with the faithful discharge by Christians of the simple domestic duties of life. In truth, the *family* is the chief seat, and often the main test, of Christian virtue, as it is the distinctive feature of humanity as ordained by God.

Ver. 6.—*The younger for young*, A.V. The *younger* (see 1 Pet. v. 5, where, however, the νεώτεροι are contrasted with the πρεσβύτεροι, as in 1 Tim. v. 1; here with πρεσβύτερος in ver. 2).

Ver. 7.—*An ensample for a pattern*, A.V.; *thy doctrine for doctrine*, A.V.; R.T. omits *sincerity* (ἀφθορσίαν), which is in the T.R. *In all things* (περὶ πάντα); as 1 Tim. i. 19 (περὶ τὴν πίστιν); "concerning, in the matter of" (Ellicott on 1 Tim. i. 19). St. Jerome and others connect these words with the preceding clause, "to be sober-minded in all things." But it is usually taken as in the text, "in all things showing thyself," etc. *Showing thyself*, etc. With regard to the somewhat unusual addition of the reflexive pronoun to the verb in the middle voice, Bishop Ellicott remarks, "Emphasis and perspicuity are gained" by it. *An ensample* (τύπος). Huther remarks that this is the only passage in the New Testament where

τύπος is followed by a genitive of the thing. In 1 Tim. iv. 12 the genitive is of the person to whom the example is given, in word, in conversation, etc., and in 1 Pet. v. 3, τύπος τοῦ ποιμνίου. Of good works (comp. ch. iii. 8). Note the stress laid by St. Paul upon Christian practice as the result of sound doctrine. Mere talk is absolutely worthless. *Uncorruptness* (ἀφθορίαν, or, as T.R., ἀδιαφθορίαν); only here in the New Testament, and not in the LXX. or in classical Greek. Ἀφθορία has the best manuscript authority; but the sense of ἀδιαφθορία as deduced from the good classical word ἀδιάφθορος, which means among other things "incorruptible"—not to be influenced by entreaties or bribes—seems to make it preferable. The word describes the quality of the *teacher* rather than of his doctrine. He is to preach the truth without fear or favour. *Gravity* (σεμνότητα); as 1 Tim. ii. 2; iii. 4. This, again, is a quality of the *teacher*. These accusatives depend upon παρεχόμενος. But the construction of the sentence is somewhat irregular for brevity's sake.

Ver. 8.—*Us for you*, A.V. and T.R. *Sound speech* (λόγον ὑγιᾶ); still depending upon παρεχόμενος. Besides his personal qualities as a teacher, his speech, or doctrine, must be *sound*. The word, common of bodily health, is only here applied to speech or doctrine; the common phrase in the pastoral Epistles is δγαινούσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ, δγαινοῦσι λόγους, and the like. *That cannot be condemned* (ἀκατάγνωστον); only here in the New Testament, once in 2 Macc. iv. 27. This marks the care that the Christian teacher must take not to say anything in his teaching rash, or reprehensible, or that can give offence or cause the ministry to be blamed (comp. 1 Tim. v. 14). *May be ashamed* (ἐντραπή). In the active voice ἐντρέπειν is "to put to shame" (1 Cor. iv. 14), and in classical Greek. In the middle voice ἐντρέπομαι, followed by a genitive of the person, or an accusative in later Greek, means to "respect, reverence" (Matt. xxi. 37; Luke xviii. 2, etc.). In the passive, as here and 2 Thess. iii. 14, it means "to be put to shame," "to be ashamed" (comp. Ps. xxxiv. 4 [LXX., xxxv. 4]). (Compare, for the sentiment, 1 Pet. ii. 15; iii. 16; and note the frequent resemblances between the pastoral Epistles and those of St. Peter.) The shame of the detractors consists in their being put to silence, having nothing to say, being proved to be slanderers. *No evil thing* (μηδὲν φαῖλον); as Jas. iii. 16; John iii. 20; v. 29. The word means "mean, worthless, paltry," and is hence synonymous with κακός.

Ver. 9.—*In subjection to for obedient unto*, A.V.; *be well-pleasing to them for please*

them well, A.V.; *gainsaying for answering again*, A.V. *Servants*; i.e. slaves (*δούλους*), the correlative to which is *δεσπόταις*, masters, who had absolute power over their slaves, and property in them (comp. 1 Pet. ii. 18, where they are called by the name of *οἰκέταις*, house-slaves). The construction is carried on from the "exhort" of ver. 6. *Well-pleasing* (*εὐαρέστους*); elsewhere spoken with reference to God (Rom. xii. 1; 2 Cor. v. 9; Eph. v. 10, etc.). In all things (*ἐν παντί*); nearly the same as *περὶ πάντα* in ver. 7; to be taken with *εὐαρέστους*. Some, however, connect the words with *ὑποτάσσεσθαι*, "to be obedient in all things." *Gainsaying* (*ἀντιλέγοντας*); as in ch. i. 9 (see note). Here, however, the "answering again" of the A.V. is a better rendering. It implies, of course, a resistance to the will of their master, and impatience of any rebuke (comp. 1 Pet. ii. 18—20).

Ver. 10.—*Furling* (*νοσφιζόμενους*); literally, *separating* for their own use what does not belong to them. So Acts v. 2, 3, "to keep back part." It is used in the same sense by the LXX. Josh. vii. 1 of Achan, and 2 Macc. iv. 32 of Menelaus, and occasionally in classical Greek (Xenophon, Polybius, etc.). *Showing* (*ἐνδεικνυμένους*). It occurs eleven times in the New Testament, viz. twice in Hebrews, and nine times in St. Paul's acknowledged Epistles. All good fidelity. All fidelity means fidelity in everything where fidelity is required in a faithful servant—care of his master's property, conscientious labour, keeping of time, acting behind his master's back the same as before his face. The singular addition *ἀγαθὴν*, coming after *ἐνδεικνυμένους*, must mean, as Bengel says, "in all good things." The duty of fidelity does not extend to crime or wrong-doing. The word "good" is like the addition in the oath of canonical obedience, "in all honest things," and is a necessary limitation to the preceding "all" (see ch. iii. 1, and note). The doctrine (*τὴν διδασκαλίαν*); as in ver. 1 (where see note). In ch. i. 9 (where see note) *ἡ διδαχὴ* is used in the same way. This use of *διδασκαλία* is confirmed by the reading of the R.T., which inserts a second *τὴν* before *τοῦ σωτήρος*. Adorn the doctrine. The sentiment is the same as that in 1 Pet. ii. 12; iv. 11. Christians are exhorted to give glory to God, and support and honour to the gospel of God's grace, by their good works and holy lives. God our Saviour (see 1 Tim. i. 1; ii. 3; iv. 10; and above, ch. i. 3, note). In all things (*ἐν παντί*); as 1 Pet. iv. 11.

Ver. 11.—*Hath appeared*, *bringing salvation to all men*, for that *bringeth salvation*, *hath appeared to all men*, A.V. and T.B. *Bringing salvation to all men* (*σωτήριος*). The R.T. omits the article *ἡ* before *σωτήριος*,

which necessitates construing *πάντων ἀνθρώποις* with *σωτήριος*, "saving to all men" "bringing salvation to all men." With the article *ἡ* as in the T.R., it may be taken either way, but it is rather more natural to construe *πάντων ἀνθρώποις* with *ἐπεφάνη*, "hath appeared to all men." The meaning of the phrase, "hath appeared to all men," is the same as the saying in the song of Simeon, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people" (Luke ii. 30, 31; comp. Col. i. 6). The gospel is not a hidden mystery, but is proclaimed to the whole world. *Σωτήριος* as an adjective is found only here in the New Testament, in Wisd. i. 14 and 3 Macc. vii. 18, and frequently in classical Greek.

Ver. 12.—*Instructing for teaching*, A.V.; *to the intent that for that*, A.V.; and *righteously for righteously*, A.V. *Instructing us, to the intent that*. This is an unnecessary refinement. Huther is right in saying that the sentence beginning with *ἵνα* might have been expressed by the infinitive mood, as in 1 Tim. i. 20, and that we ought to render it not "in order that," but simply "that." The phrase in 1 Tim. i. 20, *ἵνα παιδεύωσι μὴ βλασφημεῖν*, manifestly would justify the phrase, *παιδεύουσα ἡμᾶς ὡς δικαίως*, "teaching us to live righteously." Alford surely is wrong in saying that the *universal* New Testament sense of *παιδεύειν* is "to discipline," i.e. teach by correction. In Acts vii. 22; xxii. 3; 1 Tim. i. 20; 2 Tim. ii. 25, the idea of *teaching*, not of *correcting*, is predominant. But even if it was so, the pastoral Epistles are so decidedly classical in their use of words, that the classical use of *παιδεύειν* in such phrases as *παιδεύειν τινα καθαρίσειν* or *σώφρονα εἶναι* (Liddell and Scott) is an abundant justification of a similar rendering of this passage. And as regards the use of *ἵνα*, such phrases as *εἰπὲ ἵνα οἱ λίθοι οὗτοι ἔρτοι γενῶνται*, "Command that these stones become bread" (Matt. iv. 3; xx. 21; Luke iv. 3; x. 40); *Διεστείλατο . . . ἵνα μὴ δειν εἴπωσιν*, "He commanded them not to tell" (Matt. xvi. 20); *Συμφέρι αὐτῷ ἵνα*, "It is profitable for him that" (Matt. xviii. 6); *Προσεύχεσθε ἵνα*, "Pray that" (Matt. xxiv. 20); *Παρακάλει αὐτὸν ἵνα μὴ*, "He besought him not to send them away" (Mark v. 10); *Παρακαλοῦσιν αὐτὸν ἵνα ἄψῃται*, "They beseech him to touch" (Mark viii. 22, 30; ix. 9; x. 37; xiii. 34; Luke i. 43; vii. 36); *Ἐδεήθην . . . ἵνα*, "I asked . . . to" (Luke ix. 40); *Ἐρωτῶ σε ἵνα πέμψῃς*, "I intreat thee to send" (Luke xvi. 29; Col. iv. 16, etc.);—prove that the sense "in order that" is not necessarily attached to *ἵνα*, but that we may properly render the passage before us "teaching us . . . to live soberly," etc.

Ver. 13.—*The for that*, A.V.; *appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour*

for the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour, A.V. Looking for (*προσδεχόμενοι*); the word commonly applied to waiting for the kingdom of God (Mark xv. 43; Luke ii. 25, 38; xii. 36; xxiii. 51; Jude 21). The blessed hope. The hope here means the thing hoped for, as in Acts xxiv. 14 (where both the subjective hope and the thing hoped for are included); Gal. v. 5; Col. i. 5 (comp. too Rom. viii. 24, 25). Here the hope is called emphatically "the blessed hope," the hope of Christ's second coming in glory, that hope which is the joy and life, the strength and comfort, of every Christian soul. This is the only place in the New Testament where *μακάριος* is applied to an object which does not itself enjoy the blessing, but is a source of blessing to others. Of the fifty passages where it occurs it is applied in forty-three to persons, twice to God, three times to parts of the body (the Virgin's womb, and the eyes and ears of those who saw and heard Christ), once impersonally ("It is more blessed to give," etc., Acts xx. 35), and once, in this passage, to the hope. And appearing of the glory. In construing this clause, as well as the following, the same difficulty occurs. There is only one article to the two subjects. The question arises—Can two different subjects stand under one article? Huther affirms that they can, and refers for proof to Buttman and Winer; and, indeed, it is impossible to treat "the hope" and the "appearing" as one subject. Accepting this, the clause before us should be rendered, *Looking for the blessed hope, and the appearing of the glory of the great God*. This is a description of the second coming of the Lord, of whom it is expressly said that he will "come in the glory of his Father" (Matt. xvi. 27; Mark viii. 38). The appearing of Christ will be the appearing of the glory of the great God, not the appearing of God the Father, to whom the term *ἐπιφάνεια* is never applied, but of the Son, who is the Brightness of his Father's glory. Our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ. No doubt the Greek words can be so rendered, and perhaps (grammatically) most naturally, as e.g. in 2 Pet. i. 11, where we read, "The kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;" and so 2 Pet. iii. 18. But, on the other hand, according to what is said above, they need not be so rendered. "The great God" and "our Saviour Jesus Christ" may be two separate subjects, as "the blessed hope" and "appearing of the glory" are. And we have to inquire, from the usual language of Scripture, which of the two is most probable. Alford, in a long note, shows that *ὁ σωτήρ* is often used without the article (1 Tim. i. 1; iv. 10; Phil. iii. 20); that in analogous

sentences, where *Κύριος* is used as our Lord's title, an exactly similar construction to that in the text is employed, as 2 Thess. i. 12; 2 Pet. i. 1; 2 Cor. i. 2; Gal. i. 3; Eph. i. 2; vi. 23, etc. He also observes, after Winer, that the insertion of *ἡμῶν* after *Σωτήρης* is an additional reason for the omission of the article before *Σωτήρης*, as in Luke i. 78; Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 3, and elsewhere; and that the epithet *μεγάλου* prefixed to *Θεοῦ* makes it still more difficult to connect *Θεοῦ* with *Σωτήρης ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*; and lastly, he compares this passage with 1 Tim. ii. 3, 5, 6, and thinks the conclusion inevitable that the apostle, writing two sentences so closely corresponding—written, it may be added, so near to one another in time—would have had in view, in both passages, the same distinction of persons which is so strongly marked in 1 Tim. iii. 3, 5. On these grounds he pronounces against the rendering which is adopted by the Revised Version. Huther's conclusion is the same; partly from the grammatical possibility of two subjects (here *Θεοῦ* and *Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*) having only one article, which leaves the question of whether there are here one or two subjects to be decided on other grounds than simple grammar; and partly and chiefly from the double consideration that (1) nowhere in Scripture is *Θεός* connected directly with *Ἰησοῦς Χριστός*, as *Κύριος* and *Σωτήρ* so often are; and (2) that the collocation of God (*Θεός*) and Christ as two subjects is of constant occurrence, as e.g. 1 Tim. i. 1, 2; v. 21; vi. 13; 2 Tim. i. 2; iv. 1; Titus i. 4; to which may probably be added 2 Pet. i. 1; Jude 4; 2 Thess. i. 12; he decides, surely rightly, that the clause should be rendered, *the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*. Another question arises whether the glory belongs to both subjects. Probably, though not necessarily, it does, since we are told in Matt. xvii. 27 that "the Son of man shall come in the glory of the Father;" and in Matt. xxv. 31, "the Son of man shall come in his glory" (comp. Matt. xix. 28). The whole sentence will then stand thus: *Looking for the blessed hope, and for the appearing of the glory of the great God and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, etc. The great God (τοῦ μεγάλου)*; not elsewhere in the New Testament (except in the T.R. of Rev. xix. 17), but familiar to us from Ps. xcv. 3, "The Lord is a great God," and elsewhere, as Deut. x. 17; vii. 21; Ps. lxxvii. 14, etc. In Matt. v. 35 we read "the great King" of God. This grand description of *τοῦ μέλλοντος αἰῶνος*, "the world to come," is in contrast with *τῇ νῦν αἰῶνι*, "this present world," in which our present life is passed, but which is so deeply influenced by "the blessed hope" of that future and glorious world.

Ver. 14.—*A people for his own possession for a peculiar people, A.V. Who gave himself for us.* The resemblance in thought and diction to 1 Tim. ii. 3—6 has been already pointed out. "Who gave himself" (*ὃς ἑαυτὸν ἑαυτὸν*) is there expressed by *ὁ δὸς ἑαυτὸν*, and "that he might redeem us" (*ὅνα λυτρώσεται ἡμᾶς*) by *ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων*. (For the great truths contained in the words "who gave himself," comp. John x. 11, 17, 18; Gal. i. 4; Eph. v. 2, 25; 1 Pet. ii. 24; Heb. ix. 14.) The voluntary offering of himself is also implied in the office of our Lord as High Priest (Heb. ix. 11—14). *For us (ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν); on our behalf;* not exactly synonymous with *ἀντὶ ἡμῶν*, "in our stead." Both phrases, however, are used of our redemption by Jesus Christ. We find *ὑπὲρ* in Luke xxii. 19, 20; John vi. 51; x. 11, 15; xi. 50—52; xv. 13; xviii. 14; Rom. v. 6, 8; viii. 32; 1 Cor. v. 7; 2 Cor. v. 14, 15, 21; Gal. i. 4; Eph. v. 2, 25; 1 Thess. iii. 10; Heb. ii. 9; 1 Pet. ii. 21; iii. 18; iv. 1; 1 John iii. 16; and we find *ἀντὶ* in Matt. xx. 28 and Mark x. 45, and in *ἀντίλυτρον*, 1 Tim. ii. 6. The literal meaning of *ὑπὲρ* is "in defence of," and hence generally "on behalf of," "for the good of." The primary idea of *ἀντὶ* is "standing opposite," and hence it denotes "exchange," "price," "worth," "instead," etc. *Redeem* (*λυτρώσεται*); as Luke xxiv. 21; 1 Pet. i. 18; common in classical Greek. In the middle voice, as here, it means "to release by payment of a ransom;" in the active voice, "to release on receipt of a ransom." In 1 Pet. i. 18 the ransom price is stated, viz. "the precious blood of Christ;" as in Matt. xx. 28 it is "the life of the Son of man." The effect of this redemption is not merely deliverance from the penalty of sin, but from its power also, as appears by the following words: "a peculiar people, zealous of good works," and by the passage in St. Peter above referred to. *Purify* (*καθαρίσας*); as very frequently in the New Testament of cleansing lepers, the outside of the platter, etc., cleansing the Gentiles (Acts x. 15), putting away all sin (2 Cor. vii. 1), cleansing the Church (Eph. v. 26), purging the conscience (Heb. ix. 14), etc. The *iniquity* just spoken of was a defilement; the *redemption from iniquity* removed that defilement. The blood of Jesus Christ, the price paid for the redemption, was the instrument of cleansing (1 John i. 7, 9). *A people for his*

own possession (*λαὸν περιούσιον*); only here in the New Testament, but frequent in the LXX., coupled, as here, with *λαός* (Exod. xix. 5; Dent. vii. 6; xiv. 2; xxvi. 18), to express the Hebrew *עַמּוּל* or *עַמּוּל* עַל, a people the *peculiar* property, or treasure, of God; "peculiar" being derived from the Latin *peculium*, one's own private property, reserved for one's own private use. The Authorized Version "peculiar" expresses the sense exactly, and the *περιούσιος* of our text and of the LXX., from whom it is borrowed, is meant to define either that special reserved portion of a man's property over and above what he spends for ordinary expenses, which nobody can interfere with, or those jewels on which he sets a special value, and places safely in his treasury. In 1 Pet. ii. 10 *λαός ἐς περιποίησιν* ("a peculiar people," Authorized Version) means the same thing, that being the LXX. translation of the same Hebrew word, *עַמּוּל*, in Mal. iii. 17 ("jewels," Authorized Version), "They shall be my reserved portion or possession." The application of the phrase, *λαὸν περιούσιον*, descriptive in the Old Testament of Israel, to the Church of Christ, is very instructive. The passage in 1 Pet. ii. 10 is exactly analogous, as is the phrase, "the Israel of God" (Gal. vi. 16). *Zealous* (*ζηλωτής*); as Acts xxi. 20; xxii. 3; 1 Cor. xiv. 12; Gal. i. 14. From its special application to those who were zealous for the Law of Moses it became the name of the sect or party of the *Zealots* who played such a terrible part in the Jewish war (see Luke iv. 15). *Cananite* (Matt. x. 4; Mark iii. 18) is the Hebrew for *Ζηλωτής*. *Zeal* for good works is the indispensable mark of God's peculiar people, the inseparable fruit of the redemption and purification which is by the blood of Jesus Christ (comp. 1 Pet. i. 2).

Ver. 15.—*Reproves for rebuke, A.V. Authority (ἐπιταγής)*; see 1 Tim. i. 1 and above, ch. i. 3, "authoritative commandment." *Let no man despise thee* (*περιφρονεῖτω*); here only in the New Testament; used in a different sense by the LXX. in Wisd. i. 1, but in the same sense as here in 4 Macc. vi. 9, and also in classical Greek. In 1 Tim. iv. 12 and vi. 2 St. Paul uses the more common word, *καταφρονέω*. The apostle thus winds up the preceding portion of his Epistle.

HOMILETICS.

Vers. 1—15.—*Practical godliness the end of spiritual doctrine.* The teaching of St. Paul soars very high in respect of the hidden things of God. To none of the apostles were given more abundant revelations of heavenly mysteries. Caught up into the

third heaven, hearing unspeakable words, saturated with gifts of the Holy Ghost, he was able to lead men's souls into depths and heights of unseen things as no other teacher was. His eloquent tongue, pouring forth the riches of knowledge of an enlightened heart, could speak of God's love to man, of his eternal purposes, of his predestinating grace, of the coming and kingdom of the Lord Jesus, of the resurrection of the dead, of the inheritance of the saints in light, in words of wisdom and power certainly not inferior to those of the very chiefest apostles of Christ. And yet, in dealing with the practical duties of Christian men and women, and in teaching morality as an essential part of Christianity, there is a particularity of detail, a searching application of truth, an earnest tone of warning and of exhortation, which could not be exceeded by any teacher of ethics who knew of nothing else but human conduct and the present interests of society. With St. Paul, familiarity with the highest doctrines of revelation does not depreciate the importance of the humblest duties of daily life; it rather magnifies it, and raises those duties from an earthly to a heavenly platform. If St. Paul's sole end and aim in his apostolic labours had been to bring the daily life of every class of the community to whom he wrote into accordance with the law of righteousness, and to make human life on earth pure and happy, he could not have dwelt upon those details of practice, on which the economy of society depends for its comfort and happiness, with more earnestness and particularity than he has done. The demeanour of old men, the behaviour of old women, the influence of the aged upon the young, the innermost domestic duties of the wife and the mother, words, deeds, looks, dress, temper, disposition, affections, all comes under the constraining influence of the gospel as preached by St. Paul. In like manner that degraded portion of mankind whose condition was so pitiable in the Roman empire, the slaves, of whom there were such numbers in every considerable household, is brought under the elevating influence of Christian motive. Relations and duties full of nought but pain and humiliation in themselves, and leading naturally to the vices which are born of degradation, are elevated at once into platforms of eminent virtue. Under the holy influences of Christian faith new principles are called into life, new motives of thought and action are awakened, and the low life of the dishonest, insolent, and deceitful slave becomes the arena for the exercise of some of the highest virtues of the saint. What a lesson we have here for the Christian teacher! If the parish priest, whose intercourse with his flock brings him into contact with the infirmities and sins of the various classes of his parishioners, would bend his strength in this direction, and upon the basis of the doctrine of grace would build the superstructure of a severe and minute instruction in the details of a really holy life, the value of a parochial ministry would be seen to the full. Christianity in the family, Christianity in the shop, Christianity in the daily intercourse of man with man, would be a preaching of Christ to the world which would put the caviller to shame, and which no adversaries would be able to gainsay or to resist.

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Ver. 1.—Special instructions as to Titus's own preaching. "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine"—respecting the special department of Christians of every age, sex, and rank.

I. CHRISTIANITY IS A SYSTEM OF DOCTRINE AS WELL AS LIFE. It is a doctrine that it may be a life. 1. *The doctrine is contrasted with the fables of the false teachers*, who did nothing by their speculations but lower the tone of Christian life. A true moral life was only possible on the basis of the facts of the gospel plan of salvation (ver. 11). 2. *Its soundness contrasts with the unhealthy teaching of the false teachers*. It is called "the good doctrine" (1 Tim. iv. 6), and the "doctrine according to godliness" (1 Tim. vi. 3). Every other system corrupts; the sound doctrine renovates, elevates, purifies; for our Lord said, "Sanctify them through thy truth." It is milk for babes and meat for strong men.

II. IT IS THE DUTY OF MINISTERS TO PREACH THIS SOUND DOCTRINE. It ought to be preached: 1. *Publicly and plainly*, since there are so many "vain teachers." 2. *With certainty*, as being the undoubted truth. 3. *With all boldness*, as without fear of man

or seeking to please man. 4. *At all times*, in season and out of season. 5. *In its due relation to the duties of religion*, as the spring of obedience.—T. C.

Ver. 2.—*The duties of aged men.* The apostle begins with the most important class in the Church—those who are the leaders of the young. Their characteristic deportment is to be fourfold.

I. **SOBRIETY.** 1. *This habit of mind is contrasted with the thoughtlessness and levity of youth.* 2. *It is combined with (1) watchfulness* (1 Thess. v. 6) *and (2) prayer* (1 Pet. iv. 7). 3. *There are lofty motives to sobriety.* (1 Pet. iv. 7; v. 8.)

II. **GRAVITY**, in the sense of a dignified deportment. 1. *Old men ought not to lend themselves to the levity and flippancy of the young.* 2. *If they are grave in speech and gait, they will have more weight in the community.* There must be no undue excitability.

III. **TEMPERANCE, OR SELF-RESTRAINT.** 1. *The aged ought to show an example of self-government in regard to the passions, the appetites, and the will.* The pleasures of sense ought not to allure them, or the love of the world to carry them away.

IV. **SOUNDNESS IN FAITH, LOVE, AND PATIENCE.** Here is the trilogy of graces once more, only that patience takes the place of hope, to which it is nearly allied. 1. *There is to be a healthy action of these graces in old age.* As if in contrast with the diseases, weakness, and age of the body. The aged have seen their best days, and they ought to reconcile the decay of nature with the increase of grace, so as to make human life to its extreme limit resplendent with beauty and truth. 2. *Each of the graces has its appropriate place in the character of the aged.* (1) *Faith.* It is the subjective condition of it. The old have their hopes sustained by faith; their hearts are cheered by faith; they remain steadfast through faith. It must be at once the principle of their worship, their piety, and their endurance. (2) *Love.* The old are apt to become contracted and cold in their sympathies. But Christian love keeps the heart young and tender and sincere, and the old illustrate its power in growing tolerance, wisdom, and kindness. (3) *Patience.* They have to bear with many infirmities of body, with declining faculties, with growing decrepitude. But Christian patience must be more than a dull acquiescence with the inevitable; it must be a cheerful acceptance of suffering, that patience may have her perfect work in the closing days of life.—T. C.

Vers. 3—5.—*The duties of aged women and young women.* As woman had attained through Christianity a position of equality beside man, it was necessary to remind her that her new position involved serious responsibilities.

I. **THE DUTIES OF AGED WOMEN.** 1. *In demeanour as becometh holiness.* (1) There is an appeal to their own judgment as to what is decorous and beautiful in the Christian character. They had an experimental knowledge of the gospel, and they understood the nature and extent of its obligations as affecting their sex. (2) There was to be a harmony between their position and their character as godly women—"women professing godliness" (1 Tim. ii. 10). Their holy calling should manifest itself in their deportment, dress, speech, silence, and, above all, "in a meek and quiet spirit." 2. *Not slanderers.* (1) Old age has no active employment, but it has an active memory and a busy tongue. Thus there is a temptation for the old, unless the grace of God has given the tongue of kindness, to become censorious, malignant, and bitter, avenging themselves the more with their tongues for their very incapacity to avenge themselves in other ways. (2) There is nothing more beautiful or saintly in this world than a true mother in Israel, the presiding genius of her family circle, speaking the words of charity, softness, and kindness to all within her reach. (3) It would be an utter travesty of the gospel for aged Christian women to be slanderers, because they would thus (a) separate friends (Prov. xvi. 28); (b) inflict deadly wounds in character (Prov. xviii. 18); (c) bring dishonour on the gospel; (d) and cause discords in the Church. 3. *Not enslaved to much wine.* (1) The warning was needed on account of the national habits of the Cretans. (2) It was a moderate demand that they should give up the slavish addictedness to wine so common in Crete. She who follows the habit is a slave, and would soon lose the sense of her degradation. The early converts would, perhaps, plead the privileges of their age and country, and use wine as a solace in old age; but Titus is to teach them that hoary hairs give no

liberty to such a habit. (3) We see how the gospel purifies the habits and usages of social life. 4. *Teachers of good things.* (1) The apostle thus prescribes the right use of the tongue to those who were to be "no slanderers." (2) Their teaching was not to be in public addresses, which were forbidden (1 Tim. ii. 12), but in private life. (3) The substance of their teaching was not to be "old wives' fables," not superstitious ceremonies, or things of evil report, but things sound, pure, and honest.

II. THE DUTIES OF YOUNG WOMEN. They are regarded as under the instruction and guidance of the aged women. In Ephesus, Timothy was exhorted to teach the younger women, but it is probable that the state of the Cretan community required that the instructions of Titus should be supplemented by the more practical and continuous guidance of the elderly women. The young women were to be schooled to their duties in a wise manner. 1. *They were to be lovers of their husbands.* (1) The wife would find in this love the source of her strength, the husband the solace for his cares, and the children the guarantee for their happiness and welfare. (2) A loving wife is (a) a blessing to her husband (Prov. xii. 4); (b) brings him honour (Prov. xxxi. 23); (c) secures his confidence (Prov. xxxi. 11); (d) earns his praises (Prov. xxxi. 28). 2. *Lovers of their children.* (1) The love of a mother may be instinctive, but religious fanaticism and brutal separation can make her more unfeeling than the brutes. Rousseau would not keep his children in his house, but sent them to a public hospital; a sign, said Burke, that "bears love their young and lick them into shape, but bears are not philosophers." In India infants are often destroyed by a mother's hands, under the influence of religious delusion. (2) The first duty of a Christian woman is to make her home happy, which is impossible except on a basis of love to husband and children. (3) Religion revives natural affection as it revives all the weakened faculties of our nature, and gives it new power for good. The religious training of the young is impossible without the experience of a mother's love. 3. *Discreet.* Young women, in a new position of Christian privilege, might be tempted to rashness, enthusiasm, and impulsive conduct. They were to be wise and careful in their conduct both at home and abroad. 4. *Chaste.* In act, speech, thought, and dress, finding their true happiness in their husband's society. There are many high motives for a pure womanhood (1 Cor. vi. 19; 1 Thess. iv. 7). 5. *Workers at home.* (1) The wife's business is in her household, not in the great world of society. Religion gains no honour when home duties are neglected. (2) Her husband's interests are preserved by her industry at home. (3) Gadding abroad and busying one's self in other people's affairs tends to the spreading of evil. 6. *Good.* Such women are to be kindly and thoughtful in their family relationships, especially to servants, and not niggardly or exacting. "Their thriftiness must not degenerate into avarice." 7. *Obedient to their own husbands.* (1) This is their great duty, and thus they become types of the Church's submission to Christ. (2) Obedience would recommend the gospel to unbelieving husbands, for attention to this precept would prevent "the Word of God from being blasphemed." Grace does not deliver us from the obligations of nature (1 Cor. vii. 4—16).—T. C.

Ver. 6.—*The duty of young men.* The apostle next thinks of those who are to be the strong stays of the Church in the coming generation. "Young men exhort to be sober-minded."

I. THE NATURE OF THIS DUTY. 1. *Young men ought to be thoughtful, not rash and impulsive.* The Lord says to them, "Consider your ways." 2. *They should be circumspect, not heady and reckless,* using that Word which "giveth to the young man knowledge and discretion." 3. *They should not be self-indulgent, but self-denying.* Not "lovers of pleasure, but lovers of God." "Turn away mine eyes from viewing vanity." 4. *They should be settled in feeling and conduct, not vacillating or giddy.* "Let your hearts be fixed" (Ps. cviii. 1). "He that wavers is as a wave of the sea" (Jas. i. 6).

II. REASONS FOR SOBER-MINDEDNESS. 1. *It is according to the dictates of right reason.* It is a great thing to receive the spirit of a "sound mind." Young men are never in a right mind till they sit clothed at the feet of Jesus. 2. *Consider the snares and sorrows and drawbacks of life.* 3. *Consider that death may early reach the young.* 4. *Consider the number of young men who are ruined by the want of sober-mindedness.* 5. *The young must answer for the judgment for their follies in this life.*—T. C.

Vers. 7, 8.—*Titus himself a pattern of good works.* As a faithful minister of God, he was to mirror forth in his life and teaching the doctrines of the gospel.

I. THE MINISTER OUGHT TO BE A PATTERN OF GOOD WORKS. 1. *His teaching is useless unless it is enforced by the power of a holy example.* There must be a harmony between his doctrine and his life. 2. *Good works are the natural proofs of good principles,* and can only issue from the fountain of a purified heart. The very principles are tested by the preacher's life. 3. *His whole life is to be an ensample.* "In all things." This implies consistency in toil, endurance, and teaching.

II. THE MINISTER MUST BE A PATTERN BOTH IN THE SUBSTANCE AND IN THE SPIRIT OF HIS TEACHING. Teaching is his special sphere. 1. *It must be imparted in a right spirit.* "In doctrine showing uncorruptness and gravity." (1) He must exhibit an example of personal sincerity, not like one either seeking for applause or influenced by interested motives—like the false teachers who were in quest of filthy lucre. Sincerity has a very penetrative force among a people. (2) He must have a dignified gravity of manner, to indicate his profound seriousness of purpose and spirit. Foolish jesting and vain talking are very inconvenient in a minister of the gospel. 2. *The doctrine imparted must be sound and convincing.* "Sound speech, that cannot be condemned." (1) It must be wholesome doctrine, as contrasted with a sickly pietism; free from error, because drawn from "the sincere milk of the Word," conveyed not in the "enticing words of man's wisdom," but as the Holy Ghost teacheth. (2) It must have convincing power. "That cannot be condemned." (a) Ministers must expect their words to be sharply criticized as well as their lives. (b) The truth ought to be conveyed in such a spirit and with such a regard to the analogy of faith that it cannot be justly found fault with. (c) It must effectually silence gainsayers. "That he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no bad thing to say of us." Whether the adversary be a false teacher or a pagan, the sound speech ought to reduce him to shame and silence. —T. C.

Vers. 9, 10.—*The duties of servants.* The class of servants, or rather slaves, had received a wonderful elevation through the gospel. They were an oppressed class, and may have been tempted to imagine that their religious emancipation would necessarily change their relations to their old masters. Thus we account for the large body of practical counsel that is addressed by the apostle to this class of believers.

I. THE DUTIES OF SERVANTS. 1. *Obedience.* "Exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters." This was a manifest obligation which the gospel did not annul. It may have been a hard duty, but the gospel supplied grace for the faithful discharge of it. It mattered not whether the master was a Christian or a pagan; the gospel did not destroy his claims to obedient service. But the obedience was necessarily limited by the Divine Law, for a servant could not sin at a master's command. He must in that case willingly suffer the consequences of disobedience. 2. *A cheerful compliance with a master's will.* "And to please them well in all things; not answering again." It denotes that temper which anticipates a master's pleasure, rather than the disposition to thwart it by sullen and capricious ways. Thus they would be doing the will of God and serving the common Master of all, Jesus Christ, who gave them an example of meekness and submission. 3. *Honesty and fidelity.* "Not purloining, but showing all good fidelity." Many slaves in ancient times were entrusted with the property of their masters, as merchants, physicians, and artists. Thus they had many ways of showing their honesty. It was in their power to defraud them by embezzlement, or to waste the property, or to allow it to be wasted without check or rebuke. Servants were to have family interests at heart, and they were thus to commend themselves to the love and confidence of their masters.

II. THE DESIGN OR MOTIVE OF THIS FAITHFUL AND READY OBEDIENCE. "That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." 1. *The Saviour is as fully glorified in the servant as in the master, in the poor as in the rich, in the peasant as in the king.* Indeed, the adornment of the gospel seems more manifest in the obedience of the lowest class; for of the other classes specified it was only said "that God's Name might not be blasphemed." Calvin says God deigns to receive adornment even from slaves. 2. *The Lord lifts the slave out of his mean conditions when he seats him on equal conditions of blessing and honour at the same holy table.* 3. *The spectacle of*

cheerful and self-denying obedience on the part of this class would have an arresting influence upon an age of self-love and cynicism, such as that which influenced the world at that time.—T. C.

Vers. 11—13.—*The grace of God the true ground of all sanctification.* The apostle now sets forth the real foundation on which this exhortation to practical duty on the part of servants, and, indeed, of people of every age and sex, is based.

I. THE GRACE OF GOD. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared." 1. *This grace is from God, as its eternal Fountain, from which it flows to men.* (1) He was not made gracious by the work of the Son, for he was the God of grace from the beginning. The work of the Son only manifested it (John iii. 16). (2) The grace is from the Son as well as the Father. Grace is in every conceivable way connected with the Person of the Mediator in Scripture (1 Cor. xvi. 23; Gal. i. 6; 1 Thess. v. 28). The Father and the Son are one in the freeness of their love to mankind. (3) Grace is also connected with the Holy Ghost, who is called "the Spirit of grace" (Heb. x. 29), because he applies it and seals us to the day of redemption. Thus grace has its origin in the Father, its manifestation in the Son, its end in the Holy Ghost. 2. *The nature of this grace.* (1) It is the free gift of God to mankind in the gospel of Christ. It is thus opposed to the idea of merit in man. Works, therefore, do not procure our salvation. (2) The grace must necessarily be worthy of the character of God. (a) The gift is worthy, for it is his own Son. (b) The end is worthy, for it is his own glory and man's salvation. (c) The instrumental condition is worthy, for it is faith. 3. *The scope of this grace.* "That bringeth salvation to all men." (1) It is the only thing that can bring salvation to man. He cannot be saved by works, nor by philosophy, nor by man. (2) It has a wide scope. It "bringeth salvation to all men." (a) This does not imply that all men will eventually be saved, for Scripture expressly asserts the very contrary. (b) The connection of the passage explains the universality of the reference: "Servants, be obedient to your masters, that you may adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour; for his grace is for slave and master alike." There is no respect of persons with him. (c) It signifies that grace is the only means by which salvation is possible for the race of man. 4. *The manifestation of grace.* (1) In the Incarnation. (2) In the work of Christ. (3) In the energy of the Holy Spirit. "The darkness is past; the true light now shineth" (1 John ii. 8).

II. THE EFFECTS OF THE GRACE OF GOD. "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." 1. *This grace first manifests itself by teaching*, just as the first thing in creation was light. It must begin with teaching, and the Spirit of God is given "to teach us all things" (John xiv. 26). The original word implies the idea of a disciplining process, effected by the grace of God to correct the inherent naughtiness of the heart. 2. *The grace of God works toward the rejection of evil*, for it teaches us "to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts." (1) The denial is in heart and deed. It involves the denial of self (Luke ix. 23). (2) It is the repudiation of ungodliness in heart and life. (a) Ungodliness includes impiety, blasphemy, and infidelity. (b) It includes all living without relation to God, whether we are blasphemers or not. Thus a man may be ungodly who seeks his own pleasure, or distinction, or happiness in the world. (c) It implies the deeper enmity of the heart to God (Rom. viii. 7). (3) It is the denial of worldly lusts; including the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and vain glory of life—"all that is in the world"—which embody the enmity to God. Thus it denies (a) sensual lusts (2 Tim. ii. 22); (b) the inordinate desire of worldly things, which may be lawful in themselves. 3. *The grace of God produces certain positive effects.* "We should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." (1) It secures the due regulation of individual life. "Soberly." This refers to the duties we owe to ourselves. (a) In keeping a fair balance of judgment intellectually; (b) in keeping a due mastery over our passions—"a sobriety in speech, in behaviour, in apparel, in eating and drinking, in recreations, and in the enjoyment of lawful satisfactions." (2) It secures the faithful discharge of all duties to our fellow-men. "Righteously." Justice is an exact virtue, which can be easily measured, and is therefore the basis of commercial and civil life. A single failure in justice makes a man unjust. Therefore it is most necessary we should give our neighbour his due, and not compromise ourselves by

conduct redounding to the injury of the gospel. (3) It secures godliness. "Godly;" that is, with God, in God, for God. This godly life is a life dedicated to God and spent in his fear.

III. THE SPHERE IN WHICH THIS GRACE OF GOD PRODUCES ITS EXTENSIVE AND INTENSIVE EFFECTS. "In this present world." 1. *True piety does not disregard or despise the duties of common life.* 2. *It is in a hostile world this grace is to operate with such purifying results.* It is called "this wicked world" (Gal. i. 4); for the devil is its god, and sin is its prevailing character. 3. *It is a world that cannot be overcome but by faith.* (1 John iv. 4, 5.) 4. *It is a transitory world, in contrast with the world to come,* of which the apostle immediately speaks.

IV. THE ATTITUDE OF THE BELIEVER IN RELATION TO THE FUTURE GLORY. "Looking for the blessed hope and manifestation of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ." This attitude of blessed expectation tells powerfully upon the life of grace. The believer's position is that of waiting for and looking unto the coming of the Lord. The patriarchs waited for his first coming; we wait for his second coming. 1. *The believer's waiting attitude is lit up by a blessed hope.* (1) This is "the hope of glory" laid up for us in heaven, which is associated with the Son of God, when we shall see him as he is. (2) It is a blessed hope, because of all the blessings it brings to the believer. 2. *The believer's waiting attitude has respect to the manifestation of the Lord's glory.* This is connected with his second coming. It is the glory of "our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ," and not of the Father, because: (1) In all the five places in which the manifestation is spoken of, it is Christ, not the Father, who is referred to. The term "Epiphany" is never, indeed, applied to the Father. (2) This is the grammatical interpretation of the sentence, and is accepted by the Greek fathers generally. (3) The immediate context applies only to the Son. (4) The term "great God" would seem to be uncalled for as applied to the Father, but stands in Scripture the perpetual and emphatic witness of the Deity of Christ.—T. C.

Ver. 14.—*The purport and extent of Christ's Saviourship.* Mark—

I. THE PERSON WHO GAVE HIMSELF FOR US. "Our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ." Here the atonement is connected with the Deity of the Saviour, as if to show that the true Godhead of the Son gave infinite value to his sufferings.

II. THE ATONING WORK. "Who gave himself for us." Two things are here implied. 1. *Priestly action.* For he "gave himself" freely, the language being borrowed from Levitical worship. That typical economy could not unite priest and victim as they were united in Christ. The Father is often said to have given his Son; but the Son here gives himself, the priestly action exhibiting at once immeasurable love and voluntary obedience. He is himself "the unspeakable Gift"—the best of all gifts to man. 2. *It was a vicarious action.* For he "gave himself for us," the words in the original signifying rather for our benefit than in our stead; but, from the nature of the case, the gift was substitutionary, that it might be for our benefit. When we were "in all iniquity," and so exposed to Divine wrath, our Surety permitted that iniquity to be charged to himself.

III. THE DESIGN OF THE ATONING WORK OF CHRIST. "To redeem us from all iniquity, and purify us to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." It was a twofold design. 1. *A redemption from all iniquity.* (1) The redemption signifies deliverance by the payment of a price. Here there is a clear causal connection between Christ's blood as the ransom price and the redemption. This is Scripture usage (1 Pet. i. 18; Rev. v. 9; Gal. iii. 13). (2) The scope of this redemption. It is "from all iniquity." This is to be understood under a double aspect. (a) The iniquity includes all sin, considered as guilt and as entailing the curse of the Divine Law. His redeeming sacrifice dissolved the connection between our sin and our liability to punishment on account of it. (b) The iniquity includes all sin as morally evil, and in this sense the redemption delivers his people from all impurity. 2. *The purification of a peculiar people for himself.* (1) The primary signification is sacrificial; for the term "purify," like the cognate terms "sanctify," "sprinkle," "wash," "cleanse," points to the effect produced by sacrifice upon those defiled by sin. These are now, by the blood of Christ, readmitted to fellowship with God. Thus believers, like Israel of old, obtain a new standing. (2) The design of redemption is to consecrate a people for holy service, for

priestly worship, in separation from the world. Thus they are "a peculiar people," not singular or eccentric, but his peculiar treasure, held to be most precious, and kept with all Divine care. (3) This people is separated to good works—"zealous of good works," because partakers of the Spirit of holiness (Rom. i. 4), and of the sanctification of the Spirit (1 Pet. i. 2). This blessed fruit is worthy of a dedicated people. They must be zealots for practical holiness, for they find their best motives in two advents. —T. C.

Ver. 15.—*Pastoral work and authority.* "These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority." The business of the minister is concerning all the things commanded in this chapter both as to doctrine and duty.

I. THESE DOCTRINES AND DUTIES WERE TO BE "SPOKEN OF," SO AS TO BE BROUGHT TO BEAR WITH POWER ON THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF THE PEOPLE.

II. THEY WERE TO BE MADE MATTERS OF OBLIGATION IN THE CONSCIENCE; for Titus was to practise exhortation.

III. REBUKE WAS TO BE APPLIED WITH ALL AUTHORITY WHERE EXHORTATION FAILED OF ITS EFFECT.

IV. TITUS WAS TO LIVE SO CIRCUMSPECTLY THAT THE CRETANS COULD NOT DESPISE HIM. "Let no man despise thee." Contempt would be the natural effect of observed inconsistency in the life of the young evangelist.—T. C.

Ver. 2.—*Aged Christian men.* "That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience." There are appropriate fruits for every time of life, and the Christian man bringeth forth fruit in his season. A frivolous, fantastical age is a distasteful spectacle. Old age should be cheerful; but fun should be without frivolity, and laughter without levity.

I. THE REVERENCE DUE TO AGE. We look for sobriety of character as the result of the experience of a man who has found that there are limits to all expectations; gravity in one who is nearing his great account; and temperance in one who is supposed to have trampled down the fierce passions of youth. We reverence age for the consistency of the long years of life, and for fidelity to conscience and to Christ.

II. THE FRUITS THAT MAY RIPEN IN AGE. They are: 1. *Faith*, which is a grace that grows. As men know more of Christ by heart-experiences and life-experiences, so ought their faith to increase in him whose promises have all been "Yea and Amen." 2. *Charity*, alike in kindly estimate of others, in less bigotry, and in more comprehensiveness of embrace to all who may belong to other folds under the great Shepherd. 3. *Patience*. For while manhood has to work, age at eventide has to wait, sometimes in pain or in weakness. Still "they serve" while they wait, by prayer and quiet submission to the great will, the Lord's will. They are "examples to the flock."—W. M. S.

Ver. 3.—*Aged Christian women.* "The aged women likewise." Our "behaviour" is a sign of our character. We cannot hide the "roots" of our life. Weeds or flowers soon appear upon the earth.

I. HOLY WOMEN. Not sanctimonious, or stiff, or prudish; but holy. Never suffering irreverence to characterize their speech, levity to mark their looks, or folly to appear in their dress or demeanour. Holy, so that their quiet fellowship with God may affect their influence, and the enjoyment of the "earnest of the heaven" they are approaching in their old age may be known by their conversation.

II. TRUE WOMEN. "Not false accusers." This does not apply to courts of law, but to common life. The word is expressive; it is "make-bates," from which our word "abate." They do not lessen the honour, the reputation, the good report of others by accusations which are unworthy and untrue.

III. TEMPERATE WOMEN. "Not given to much wine." Never flushed with the semi-intoxication of indulgence. Never made frivolous and foolish in speech through strong drink. Avoiding this as the tyranny of a *habit* which may become with them a second nature. "Not given to much wine."

IV. USEFUL WOMEN. "Teachers of good things." Of the highest truths that make for salvation, and of all the truths which they have learned, that minister to industry, to

household economy, to thrift and piety and prosperity. Every aged woman has a large ministry to fulfil when she remembers how large is the category of "good things."—W. M. S.

Vers. 4, 5.—*Counsels to young women.* Here there are what may be termed "instructions" to the aged women as to the counsels to be given by them to the young women. Such authority does the gospel give to age; such reverence and respect for age does it expect from young women. Nations deteriorate in character whenever youth becomes insolent in its own independence, and resentful of authority.

I. SOBRIETY, or wisdom; that calm quietude of heart and mind which is not intoxicated by vanity, or carried away with the sensationalism of pleasure.

II. CHASTITY. Alike in thought, in speech, and in manner and conduct. Purity makes queenly women. One stain spoils the most exquisite sculpture. The beauty of marble is its purity, and the beauty of womanhood is chastity.

III. HOME-KEEPERS. Making home first of all a centre of attraction by its order and cleanliness and comfort; then by its harmonies of peace and love, so that no discordant notes may mar the music of its joy; and then by avoiding gossiping visits, and the excitements of habitual restlessness, and a too great love of shopping, securing the safety of economy and the honour of a wife who "weaves" all into beauty and order at home.

IV. OBEDIENCE. Not slavish submission to man; for woman is his equal, and "was not," as an old divine says, "taken from his feet, to be beneath him, or his head, to be above him; but from his side, to be equal with him." Still, there is the obedience which consists in consulting him, judging and conforming—where conscience is not offended—to his judgment and his wishes.

All this that "the Word of God be not blasphemed," or its *fame injured*, which is the true meaning of blaspheme, viz. to blast the fame of it.—W. M. S.

Ver. 6.—*Counsels to young men.* "Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded," so that—

I. THEY MAY TAKE SUCH A VIEW OF LIFE AS TO INCLUDE ITS DIFFICULTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

II. THEY MAY BE KEPT FREE FROM THE UNDUE DISAPPOINTMENT OF TOO ENTHUSIASTIC MINDS.

III. THEY MAY BE KEPT FROM THE WINE-CUP AND ALL HARMFUL STIMULANTS.

IV. THEY MAY REMEMBER THAT LIFE IS A SOLEMN THING, FULL OF ACCOUNTABILITY.

V. THEY MAY KEEP THEIR MINDS OPEN TO COUNSEL FROM AGE AND EXPERIENCE.—W. M. S.

Vers. 7, 8.—*A teacher's influence.* Titus is to remember that *personal character* is the most eloquent counsel and the most convincing argument of the gospel.

I. PATTERN. Not a slavish example of mere deeds. For this is not the gospel ideal. We are not to copy mere actions, but to catch *the spirit of the teacher*. This makes true *art*, and it makes also true religion. We admire the pattern, but we do not copy it by "the rule of thumb," but by the adoption of the same spirit. Christ in us! The *mind* of Christ.

II. DOCTRINE. Not mere dogma, which is an artificial thing, and may or may not be true, according as the authority which gives it may be wise and enlightened, or ignorant and superstitious. Doctrine is different. It is a revealed truth which has its response in the heart and conscience, and its attestation in life. This the gospel has. And he is to show "uncorruptness;" that is, he is not to defile it with worldly compromises. And "gravity;" for it is not meant to be the light theme of intellectual discussion, but the gravest matter of obedience. And "sincerity." It is not to be preached for *expedient* reasons, as, for instance, the *security of life*, or the *safety of the state*, or the ways in which even Socrates would have men honour the gods, although inwardly he disbelieved in them; but with sincerity of conviction as to their reality and truth.

III. SOUND SPEECH. No hollow rhetoric. No statements in excess of fact for the sake of impression; but sound all through in argument, illustration, and attestation.

Such conduct and speech will *shame* those who "see the fruits," and can say no "evil" of us.—W. M. S.

Vers. 9, 10.—*Counsels to slaves.* This Epistle was circulated in Asia Minor, where there were some eighty thousand slaves. "Exhort slaves, or bond-servants," etc. The gospel cured slavery, as it cured polygamy, by a slow and steady development of the doctrine and spirit of the cross—that we are all one in Christ Jesus, that we are not our own, and that we ought to love others *even as ourselves*. And no man would like to be a slave himself.

I. OBEEDIENCE. They *were* slaves, and they had *masters*. While that relationship remained, let them show the conquests of the gospel in their endeavours to please, and in their not "gainsaying," or answering again. Masters would see in such conduct the divinity of the gospel; and slaves would not *suffer in vain*—it would give the dignity of "ministry" even to their lives.

II. BEAUTY. Not "purloining," which slaves are tempted to do. Having been purloined or "stolen" themselves, it would not seem very harmful to them to steal things from their masters. But they were to "adorn the gospel"—to show how "beautiful" it could make their rude life, and the rough, hard lot of a slave.

So we all have here the gospel in its *beauty*. "Adorn," and in its *breadth*, "all things."—W. M. S.

Ver. 11.—*Christ for every man.* The gospel is universal. It knows nothing of race, or country, or clime. It is the grace of the Father to every child. It reveals the *nature* of God himself, which is love.

I. HERE IS A QUESTION TO BE CONSIDERED. It is said by the apostle that it "has appeared unto all men." Is this so? Are there not multitudes ignorant of the gospel—multitudes who have never heard the joyful sound? Unquestionably. But for all that, it has appeared *for* all men, and *this* is the true meaning of the expression. Its invitation is *to* all. Its provisions are for all, and it rests with us to go into all the world and preach a gospel which has room yet for the world at its banquet-table of grace.

II. HERE IS A SALVATION TO BE BROUGHT. This explains everything. It brings salvation. Some will not accept it. Some will only use it as a miraculous charm, without applying it to the conscience and the character. What is it, then, to be saved? To be delivered from the condemnation of the Law is not all. We are to be saved from *ourselves*, from every tyrannous yoke of habit, every corrupting cancer of evil, every relic of selfishness and sin; and this is illustrated and explained in the succeeding verses. So that salvation is as broad in its application as it is beautiful in its results.—W. M. S.

Ver. 12.—*True self-denial.* Here we see that the cross of Christ has its influence within ourselves as well as on the moral government of God. We are not left *passive* in a mere receptivity of blessing; we are *actively* to co-operate with the Spirit of God in working out our salvation.

I. HERE IS SELF-DENIAL. But *what* are we to deny? Our better selves? No; we are to please our conscience, to satisfy our sense of moral order and beauty, to gratify the spiritual being. All depends, in our consideration of self-denial, upon which *self* we are to deny, the lower self or the higher self. Ungodliness is to be denied: for nothing can minister to the true ends of our being that is not of *God*. Without "godliness" we are graceless, and all seeming beauty is meretricious and unreal. Worldly lusts are numerous. Lust is love in wrong directions. It is not merely excess or a question of degree; it is a question of *kind*. Love may be pure, or it may be the lust of the eye, which is sensuality. The pride of life is the lust of pride in mere carnal enjoyment and ambitious aim. We must deny the thorns and the tares of the one to leave room for the harvest of holiness. But—

II. NEGATIONS ARE NOT ENOUGH. We are not good by what we *give up* simply, but by what we *take up*. The cross has its creative as well as its destructive influence. "I am *gracified* with Christ: nevertheless I live;" and *how*? "Soberly;" giving room for reason to take the place of passion, and for conscience to conquer the excitements of

intoxicated desire. "Righteously;" so that it may be seen that wickedness is wrong—our life "wrong," that is, twisted from the "straight." "Godly;" that is, not governed by laws of custom, or expediency, or self-pleasing, but by God's will, and the Spirit of God in the heart. For as nature is beautiful because therein we see the ideal of God—no *art* being really beautiful that is not true to nature—so no life is pure and holy that has not God's thought and purpose in it. And we are to do all this amid temptation and hesitation, in "this present world."—W. M. S.

Ver. 13.—*The coming day.* We are to live with a great sky of immortality above us; for no mere secularism has motive power enough to sustain a noble life. It breaks down always through the consciousness that nothing matters much, for death ends all; as the sceptic in Ecclesiastes is supposed to feel when he says, "All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked."

I. THE UPWARD LOOK. "Looking for that blessed hope." What is that hope? This—that one day all inequalities will be adjusted, all wrong redressed, all faithful service rewarded, and all true character revealed.

II. THE REVEALING DAY. "At the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." *How* his appearing will take place we know not. Nor *when*. Nor *where*. But all Scripture teaches that there is a day for "the manifestation of the sons of God," and for the judgment on worldly and wicked men. Our apostle prays that "we may find mercy of the Lord in that day." The exile has the hope of seeing his native land. The child at school looks for and longs for home. And this with us is a *blessed* hope, because it makes us happy and restful here and now, and makes us joyful even in tribulation; for we *look for* "a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God."—W. M. S.

Ver. 14.—*The giving of the self.* This is the most beautiful of the sentences in this Epistle. Christ came not merely to teach, or to reveal the fatherhood of God, but to give himself.

I. HE DID THIS IN HIS LIFE. All his exquisite sensibilities were bruised in a world of selfishness and sin. The sorrows and griefs of men hurt him. He did not merely give his *thoughts*, or give his *time*, or give his infinite help. He "gave himself."

II. HE DID THIS IN HIS DEATH. As our Sacrifice he gave himself, "that he might redeem us from all iniquity;" not from guilt alone, but from every form of evil. The perfectly voluntary character of our Saviour's redemptive mission is seen in such expressions as "*I come to do thy will, O God,*" and when concerning his life he says, "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself." This voluntarism on his part itself destroys all those critical objections to the atonement which were once raised against the suffering of the innocent one for the guilty; for, in the *first place*, Christ "gives himself" and, in the *second place*, he does it for a *worthy end*; not that he may appease the wrath of his Father, but that he may honour his moral government by his perfect obedience unto death, and that he may redeem men from more than the curse of the Law, viz. from all iniquity. Thus, again, the end of the gospel is *character*—that this earth may be as the garden of the Lord, in which all iniquity may be down-trodden and destroyed.—W. M. S.

Ver. 15.—*Cultivation of respect.* "Let no man despise thee." For through the personal influence even the first apostles and teachers had to win their way.

I. RELIGIOUS TEACHERS NEED ESPECIALLY TO REMEMBER THAT EVEN WORLDLY MEN DESPISE HYPOCRITES. If men recommend a medicine they do not take, or exhort to obedience of a law which they do not themselves obey, or seek to inspire admiration for a virtue which they only wear as a cloak, or affect a love to the Saviour which ends in no self-denial or sacrifice, they are hypocrites, and men despise them.

II. RELIGIOUS TEACHERS NEED ESPECIALLY TO REMEMBER THAT MEN WHO ARE DESPISED HAVE NO REAL POWER. That is, of course, *rightly* despised; for they may be wrongly despised. It is written of our Lord, "He was despised and rejected of men." So that we must keep in remembrance the fact that what St. Paul means is "deservedly despised." No rhetoric, no argument, no brilliancy of thought, no ability of application or illustration can make any minister of Christ really useful and effective if his cha-

racter and reputation are justly despised. As "Ossili" says, "character is higher than intellect."—W. M. S.

Vers. 1—10.—*Genuine morality.* "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine," etc. Paul, having given Titus directions as to the organization of a Christian Church in Crete, and charged him to contend against those who, in the name of Christianity, propagated doctrines at variance both with the truths and the spirit of the gospel, here urges that *genuine morality* which should be the grand aim and tendency of all gospel preaching. The grand subject presented in this passage is *genuine morality*. There have been, and still are, those who regard morality and religion as two distinct subjects or lines of conduct. But they are essentially one; one cannot exist without the other. The essence of both consists in supreme regard to the Divine will as the only standard of character and rule of life. From these verses we may draw three general truths in relation to this subject.

I. GENUINE MORALITY LEGISLATES ALIKE FOR ALL MANKIND. It speaks to man authoritatively, whatever his personal peculiarities, adventitious distinctions, social relations, secular circumstances, official position, the number of his years, or the characteristics of his country. Moral law meets him everywhere; he can no more escape it than he can the atmosphere he breathes. In these words persons are mentioned distinguished by three fundamental facts. 1. *The fact of age.* Amongst the millions of the race, not many in any generation can be found that came into existence exactly at the same minute. Hence there are those differing in age from one year to a hundred or more. Hence Paul speaks here of "aged men" and "aged women," "young men" and "young women." At the first dawn of moral consciousness, up to the last breath of earthly existence, the voice of duty speaks—"Thus saith the Lord." No one has strength enough to extricate himself from the ties of moral obligation. Not even that mighty spirit who leads the "world captive at his will" can break the shackles of moral responsibility. 2. *The fact of sex.* Here are "men" and "women," both the aged and the young. However closely identified in affection and interest, moral duty treats each as a distinct personality. In human legislation the obligation of the woman, in some cases, is absorbed in that of the man. Not so with the moral legislation of Heaven. Each must bear its own burden. Inasmuch as the woman is as bound to follow the will of God as the man, no man has a right to interfere with the freedom of her thought, the dictates of her conscience, or the independency of her devotions. For long ages men have not recognized this fact, and they have treated women as their toys of pleasure and instruments of gratification. Women are beginning to wake up to their rights, and the day of man's tyranny is drawing to a close. 3. *The fact of relationship.* Paul says, "Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters." Why the duty of servants should be here referred to and not that of masters, is not because masters have not their duty, but perhaps at this time in Crete there were slaves who were disloyal and rebellious. Whilst the duty of servants is here referred to, the fact must not be overlooked that morality is binding on men in every social relationship, on the rulers as well as the ruled, the judges as well as the criminals, the parents as well as the children, the employers as well as the *employés*. What is wrong for one is wrong for all, and the reverse.

II. GENUINE MORALITY REACHES TO THE SPRINGS OF THE HEART. It does not concern itself with the external conduct. "Bodily exercise profiteth but little." But as it regards external conduct as the evolutions of the states of the heart, it legislates for those states. It says, "Keep the heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." Glance at the virtues here inculcated. "That the aged men be sober [sober-minded], grave, temperate." The exhortation to sobriety is also addressed to aged women: "That they be not given to much wine." Also to the young women: "Teach the young women to be sober." And to the young men: "Exhort to be sober-minded." Although physical sobriety is undoubtedly referred to, moral sobriety, serious thoughtfulness, and self-restraint are evidently included and regarded as fundamental. Moral sober-mindedness is the effective preventative and cure of all physical intemperance. No argument, either for total abstinence or against it, can be sustained by the phrase, "Not given to much wine." All the words convey is—Do not get drunk. "Sound in faith, in charity [love], in patience." This means—Have a healthy faith, a faith well founded; a healthy love,

a love fastened on the supremely lovable; a healthy patience, a patience that shall bear up with fortitude and magnanimity under all the trials of life. "As becometh holiness"—reverent in demeanour. Let the whole life be full of that "holiness without which no man can see the Lord." "Not false accusers"—not slanderers. It has been observed that old women are specially tempted to garrulity and querulousness; hence the exhortation here. "Teachers of good things"—of that which is good. Things good in themselves as well as in their tendencies and issues; teachers, not merely by words, but by example. "That they may teach [train] the young women to be sober." The expression, "to be sober," should be omitted. "To love their husbands." The duty implies that the husband is lovable; there are some men who are called husbands so morally abhorrent and disgusting, that to love them would be impossible. The ideal husband must be loved. "To love their children." A mother's love, of a certain kind, is proverbial. Maternal love, wrongly directed, has been one of the chief curses of the race. "To be discreet"—sober-minded. A proper cheerfulness in mothers is a precious virtue, but volatile frivolousness is a serious evil. "Chaste"—purity of the body, freedom from obscenity in language and life. Nothing in society is more beautiful than a thoroughly chaste woman—chaste in language, chaste in dress, chaste in movement; and nothing is more disgusting than the reverse—a woman unclean in appearance, in costume, in language, in manners. "Keepers [workers] at home." Wives must work as well as husbands. Work is a condition of health and of true enjoyment. An idle wife is a bane both to herself and her family. "At home." This may not mean entirely in her own house, but in her own sphere, it may be in the garden, the field, the school-room, the Church, etc. "Good"—kind, amiable, sympathetic, generous, free from all that is malign, envious, and jealous. "Obedient [being in subjection] to their own husbands." This implies, of course, that the husband's commands are wise, right, and useful. "That the Word of God be not blasphemed." This refers, perhaps, to all the previous exhortations, and expresses a grand reason for the cultivation of all virtues. Our conduct in all things should be such as to bring honour rather than dishonour on our Lord and Master. "Let your light also so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." "Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded." Youth, in the swelling streams of its passions, the wild play of its fancy, and its craving for the romantic, is fearfully exposed to mental insobriety. Hence, no duty for the young is more urgent than that of obtaining a self-mastery. Titus, whom Paul commands to exhort young men to this duty, was himself a comparatively young man. He could scarcely have been more than forty years of age. "Brought up in a pagan home, not improbably in the luxurious and wicked Syrian Antioch, drawn to the Master's side in the fresh dawn of manhood, tried in many a difficult task and found faithful, the words of Titus exhorting the youth of Crete to be sober-minded or self-restrained would be likely to have great weight." "In all things showing thyself a pattern [ensample] of good works, in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you [us]." In order that the exhortations of Titus might have full force, Paul here addresses an admonition to him. He is to show himself a "pattern of good works" in all things; he is to be a model of excellence in all his relations to the men and women of Crete, both the aged and the young. He must be pure, grave, and sincere. His preaching, too, should be such that could not be "condemned"—sound, healthy, practical, not fanciful, sentimental, and morbid. Ah! how many sermons preached every Sunday men of reason, thoughtfulness, conscience, recoil from and condemn! "Exhort servants to be obedient [in subjection] to their own masters, and to please them well [to be well pleasing to them] in all things; not answering again [not gainsaying]; not purloining, but showing all good fidelity." Herein is enjoined on servants obedience, acquiescence, honesty, faithfulness. All this implies, of course, that the master is what he ought to be, that his commands are righteous, that his words are truthful, and that the work he enjoins is lawful and right. "That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." From this it would seem that even slaves, in righteously serving their masters, may even honour God in their humble service. Thus from this passage we learn that genuine morality reaches the very springs of the heart, the fountain of all actions. He is not a moral man who only acts in strictest conformity to the conven-

tional rules of society, nor is he even a moral man who merely fulfils the letter of the Divine commands. "All these commandments have I kept from my youth up. . . . Yet one thing thou lackest," etc. He only is the true man whose governing sympathies flow in the channels of eternal right, and whose activities are ever engaged in endeavours to please the mighty Maker of his being. The will of God, and that only, is the datum of true ethics.

* III. GENUINE MORALITY IS THE GRAND PURPOSE OF GOSPEL TEACHING. "But speak thou the things which become [befit] sound doctrine, that the aged men," etc. His teaching is to be in contrast with that of the false teachers mentioned in the previous verses, and which led to immorality of conduct. This verse and the seventh, urging Titus, as a preacher, to be a pattern in all things, both in his teaching and his conduct, justifies the inference that the grand end of gospel teaching is the promotion of *genuine morality*. In the eighth verse of the next chapter, Paul distinctly states that Titus was so to teach that his hearers might be "careful to maintain good works." This is a point which what is called the "Church" has, in its teachings, practically ignored. The gospel has been preached to sustain theologies, to establish sects, and to maintain certain institutions, ecclesiastical and political, instead of making men *morally* good, honest, faithful, and heroically loyal to the "truth as it is in Jesus." Here, then, we have the only *infallible test of pulpit usefulness*. In what does the real utility of the pulpit consist? In gathering large audiences? Any charlatan can do this; and, frequently, the greater the charlatan the most successful. In generating in the congregation the largest amount of superficial religious sentiment? This often emasculates the reason, diseases the conscience, enervates the will, and renders the whole atmosphere of the soul insalubrious and depressing. No; but in making men *moral*, the living agents evermore of good works. I estimate a true Church, not by the number of its members, the apparent earnestness of its devotions, or the amount of its contributions, but by the number of its professors who are too truthful to lie, too honest to defraud, too morally noble to do or to countenance a mean or a dishonourable act—to whom, in short, all worldly wealth and power, and life itself, are held cheap as dirt compared with the right. When Churches are made up of such members, then, and not until then, they will command the confidence, the sympathy, the trade, and the influence of the world. Well does Emerson say, "There is no morality without religion, and there is no religion without morality." "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." He who loves God keeps the commandment, loves God in action. Love is obedience in the heart, obedience is love in the life. Morality is religion in practice, religion is morality in principle."—D. T.

Vers. 11—15.—*The soul-culture of the world.* "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men," etc. "Taking occasion from what he had just said of the connection between the conduct of Christians and the doctrine they professed to have received, and the connection of both with the glory of God, the apostle proceeds in these verses to ground the whole of his exhortations respecting the behaviour of Christians in the essentially moral nature and design of the grace of God, as now manifested in the gospel" (Dr. Fairbairn). As if the apostle had said, "You must exhort all orders, those of every age and condition, of each sex, bond as well as free, to struggle after spiritual goodness because the 'grace of God,' or the gospel, has come to you." Our subject is the *soul-culture of the world*. Man requires training. He needs physical training, intellectual training, and, above all, spiritual training, the training of the soul into a higher life. We have here the *instrument*, the *process*, and the *end* of true soul-culture.

I. THE INSTRUMENT OF TRUE SOUL-CULTURE. What is it? Not science, legislation, philosophy, poetry, or any of the arts. What, then? "The grace of God." What is that? Undoubtedly God's merciful plan and ministries to restore the fallen world. The Epiphany, or manifestation of this redemptive love of God for the world, we have in the advent and ministry of Christ to this earth. "The grace of God" stands for the gospel. Concerning this instrument, observe: 1. *It is the love of God.* Divine love is the cause, the essence, and the effective energy of all God's redemptive ministries. 2. *It is the love of God to save.* "That bringeth [bringing] salvation." Salvation, that is, the restoration of man to the knowledge, the image, and the friend-

ship of God. This is the aim and the work of the "grace of God." Without this grace there would be no salvation. 3. *It is the love of God revealed to all.* "Hath appeared to all men." The gospel is not for a tribe or a class, but for man as man. Like the concave heavens, it embraces the wide world; it is for "*all men.*"

II. THE PROCESS OF TRUE SOUL-CULTURE. This process involves three things.

1. *The renunciation of a wrong course.* "Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts." These expressions are an epitome of all that is sinful and wrong in human life. Are they not all-prevalent and all-potent? "Ungodliness," or practical atheism, where is it not? "Worldly lusts," the impulses of sensuality, selfishness, pride, and ambition, they are the springs of worldly action the world over. Now, these are not only to be renounced, repudiated, but they are to be defied, resisted, and renounced; they must be given up. "Ungodliness" must give way to true piety, "worldly lusts" must be renounced for impulses spiritual and Divine. 2. *The adoption of a right course.* "We should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." It is not enough to renounce the evil; the good must be adopted. Negative excellence is not holiness. Strip the soul of all evil, and if it has not goodness in it, it "lacks the one thing" without which, Paul says, "I am nothing." We must live "soberly," holding a mastery over our own passions and impulses; "righteously," rendering to all men their due; "godly," practically realizing the presence, the claims, and the love of God in our every-day life. All this "in this present world," or in the present course of things. This "present world" urgently requires such a course of life, for it is dangerous and transitory withal. 3. *The fixing of the heart upon a glorious future.* "Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearance of the [appearing of the glory of our] great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Are there two personalities here, or one? One, I think. "The great God our Saviour," or our great God and Saviour. The object of hope is, then, the future epiphany of the Divine, all glorious to behold. To see the redemptive God as we have never yet seen him in this morally hazy scene, this is the "blessed hope." Such a hope implies: (1) A vital interest in the epiphany. We never hope for that for which we have not a strong desire. (2) An assurance that such an epiphany will take place. Desire, of itself, is not hope. We desire many things we cannot hope for. It becomes hope when it is combined with expectation, and expectation implies the existence of grounds or reasons. That there will be such a manifestation, there are abundant reasons found in the apparent irregularities of Divine Providence in its operations here, in the instinctive longings of the human soul throughout all lands and ages, as well as in the clear and frequent declarations of the written Word.

III. THE END OF TRUE SOUL-CULTURE. "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Observe: 1. *The end is moral redemption.* "Redeem us from all iniquity." Redemption is not something that takes place outside of a man; its achievement is within. It is a raising of the soul from ignorance to knowledge, from vice to virtue, from selfishness to disinterestedness, from materialism to spirituality, from the mastery of the devil to the reign of God. 2. *The end is spiritual restoration to Christ.* "Purify unto himself a peculiar people [a people for his own possession]." Restoration to his likeness, his friendship, his service. 3. *The end is complete devotedness to holy labour.* "Zealous of good works." What are good works? Not any particular class of works. All works are good that spring from a good motive; and the good motive is supreme love for the Supremely Good. Works springing from this motive, whether manual or mental, social or personal, civil or ecclesiastic, public or private, all are good. 4. *The end involves the self-sacrifice of Christ.* "Who gave himself." Here is the grandest sacrifice ever made in the universe. Nothing grander could be. (1) *The greatest possession a man has is himself.* What are millions of acres, or the rule of kingdoms, in the estimation of the owner as compared to himself? "Skin for skin," etc. (2) *The greatest self in the whole creation is Christ.* He was, in some special sense impenetrable to us, the only begotten Son of God, and he gave himself. If he had given a universe, his gift would not have been equal to this. His gift teaches the enormity of moral evil.—D. T.

EXPOSITION.

CHAPTER III.

Ver. 1.—*In subjection for subject, A.V.; rulers for principalities, A.V.; to authorities for and powers, A.V. and T.R.; to be obedient for to obey magistrates, A.V.; unto for to, A.V. Put them in mind (δομιμνησκε); as 2 Tim. ii. 14. To rulers, to authorities. Many uncials, which the R.T. follows, omit the καθ, but it seems necessary to the sense. The change from "principalities and powers" to "rulers" and "authorities" does not seem desirable. Ἀρχαὶ and ἐξουσίαι is a favourite juxtaposition of St. Paul's (1 Cor. xv. 24; Eph. i. 21; iii. 10; vi. 12; Col. i. 16; ii. 10, 15). It occurs also in 1 Pet. iii. 22. In all the above examples the words, it is true, apply to the angelic hosts, but the words are elsewhere applied separately to human government, and in Luke xx. 20, they are applied together to the authority of the Roman governor. To be obedient (πείθαρχεῖν); only here and in Acts v. 29, 32; xxvii. 21. It follows here its classical use, "to obey a superior," well expressed in the Authorized Version "to obey magistrates." The simple "to be obedient" of the Revised Version does not express the sense. To be ready unto every good work. St. Paul is still speaking with especial reference to magistrates and the civil power. Christians were to show themselves good citizens, always ready for any duty to which they were called. Christianity was not to be an excuse for shirking duties, or refusing obedience where it was due. The only limit is expressed by the word "good." They were to give tribute to whom tribute was due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour; but, if ordered to do evil, then they must resist, and obey God rather than man (Acts iv. 19). (See the similar limitation in ch. ii. 10, note, and compare, for the whole verse, the very similar passage, Rom. xiii. 1—7.)*

Ver. 2.—*Not to be contentious for to be no brawlers, A.V.; to be for but, A.V.; toward for unto, A.V. To speak evil of no man (μηδένα βλασφημεῖν). Probably especially pointed in the first place at a natural tendency of oppressed Christians to speak evil of their rulers (2 Pet. ii. 10; Jude 10), but extended into a general precept which might be especially needful for the rough and turbulent Cretans. Not to be contentious (ἀνδρῶν εἶναι); as 1 Tim. iii. 3, note. To be gentle (ἐπιεικεῖς); coupled, as here, with ἀνδρῶν in 1 Tim. iii. 3. Showing (ἐνδεικνόμενος); a word of frequent occurrence in St. Paul's vocabulary (Rom. ii. 15; ix. 17, 22; Eph. ii. 7, etc.; see above, ch. ii. 10, note).*

Meekness (πραότης); another Pauline word (1 Cor. iv. 21; 2 Cor. x. 1; Gal. v. 23, etc.; 1 Tim. vi. 11; 2 Tim. ii. 25). The precept is given its widest extension by the double addition of "all" and "to all men." The roughness, or want of courtesy, of others is no excuse for the want of meekness in those who are the disciples of him who was meek and lowly in heart (Matt. xi. 29). All men, whatever their station, the highest or the lowest, are to receive meek and gentle treatment from the Christian.

Ver. 3.—*We for we ourselves, A.V.; aforesaid for sometimes, A.V.; hating for and hating, A.V. Foolish (ἀνόητοι); a Pauline word (Gal. iii. 1, 3), found also in Luke xxiv. 25 (see 1 Tim. vi. 9); of frequent use in classical Greek. Disobedient (ἀπειθεῖς); as ch. i. 16. In Luke i. 17 it stands, as here, absolutely, meaning disobedient to God and his Law. Deceived (πλανώμενοι); led astray, made to wander from the path of truth and right, either by false systems of religion, or by our own evil affections and appetites (see 2 Tim. ii. 13; 1 Pet. ii. 25; 2 Pet. ii. 15, etc.). Serving; slaves to (δουλεύοντες); 2 Pet. ii. 19 (see above, ch. ii. 2). Lusts (ἐπιθυμίας); not always in a bad sense, as here, though usually so (see Luke xxii. 15; Phil. i. 23; 1 Thess. ii. 17; Rev. xviii. 14). Pleasures (ἡδοναίς); always in a bad sense in the New Testament (Luke viii. 14; Jas. iv. 1, 3; 2 Pet. ii. 13). Living (διδυχοῦντες); see 1 Tim. ii. 2, where it is followed by βίον, which is here understood. Διδυχεῖν τὸν βίον, αἰῶνα, χρόνον, σάββατον, etc., are common phrases both in the LXX. and in classical Greek for passing or spending one's life, time, age, etc. But it is only found in the New Testament here and in 1 Tim. ii. 2. Malice (κακία). This word is sometimes used of wickedness generally, as Acts viii. 22; Jas. i. 21; 1 Cor. v. 8; and probably Rom. i. 29; and even of badness in things, as Matt. vi. 34. But it frequently in the New Testament denotes malice, the desire to do harm to others, as Eph. iv. 31; Col. iii. 8, etc. Envy (φθόνος); almost always found in St. Paul's enumeration of sins (Rom. i. 29; Gal. v. 21; 1 Tim. vi. 4, etc.). Hateful (στυγητός); only here in the New Testament, not found in the LXX. (though the verb στυγέω occurs once or twice in the Maccabees), but used in good classical Greek. The above is a sad but too true picture of human life without the sweetening influences of God's Holy Spirit.*

Ver. 4.—*When for after that, A.V.; the kindness of God our Saviour, and his love toward man for the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man, A.V. Kindness*

{*χρηστότης*); used by St. Paul only in the New Testament, and by him frequently in the sense of "kindness," whether of God (as Rom. ii. 4; xi. 22; Eph. ii. 7) or of man (as 2 Cor. vi. 6; Gal. v. 22; Col. iii. 12). In Rom. iii. 12, where it has the wider sense of "good" or "right," it is the phrase of the LXX., who use *χρηστότης* for the Hebrew כִּי. In like manner, *χρηστός* is frequently used in the sense of "kind" (Luke vi. 35; Rom. ii. 4; Col. iii. 12; 1 Pet. ii. 3). This is exactly analogous to the use of *κακός* and *κακία*, in the limited sense of "malicious," "malice" (see preceding note to ver. 3). Love toward man (*φιανθρώπια*); only here and Acts xxviii. 2 in the New Testament. It occurs repeatedly in the Books of the Maccabees, and is common in good classical Greek. God our Saviour (see 1 Tim. i. 1; ii. 3; ch. ii. 10, etc.). Appeared (ch. ii. 11).

Ver. 5.—*Done in for of, A.V.; did ourselves for have done, A.V.; through for by, A.V.* By works (*ἐξ ἔργων*); i.e. in consequence of. God's kindness and love to man did not spring from man's good work as the preceding and producing conditions (comp. Gal. ii. 16, and the notes of Bishops Ellicott and Lightfoot). Done in righteousness (*τῶν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ*); the particular description of the works wrought in a sphere or element of righteousness (Alford and Ellicott). Which we did ourselves; emphasizing that they were our good works, done by us in a state of righteousness. All this, as the cause of our salvation, the apostle emphatically denies. Not, etc., but according to his mercy he saved us. The predisposing cause, the rule and measure of our salvation, was God's mercy and grace, originating and completing that salvation. Through the washing of regeneration (*διὰ λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας*). Here we have the means *through* or *by* which God's mercy saves us. The *washing* or rather *laver* of regeneration (*λουτρόν*)—found elsewhere in the New Testament only in Eph. v. 26, in exactly the same connection—is the *laver* or *bath* in which the washing takes place. The nature or quality of this bath is described by the words, "of regeneration" (*τῆς παλιγγενεσίας*); elsewhere in the New Testament only in Matt. xix. 28, where it seems rather to mean the great restoration of humanity at the second advent. The word is used by Cicero of his restoration to political power, by Josephus of the restoration of the Jews under Zerubbabel, and by several Greek authors; and the LXX. of Job xiv. 14 have the phrase, *ὡς πάλιν γένεσθαι*, but in what sense is not quite clear. *Παλιγγενεσία*, therefore, very fitly describes the new birth in holy baptism, when the believer is put into possession of a new spiritual life, a new nature, and a new inheritance of glory. And

the laver of baptism is called "the laver of regeneration," because it is the ordained means by or through which regeneration is obtained. And *renewing of the Holy Ghost*. It is doubtful whether the genitive *ἀνακαινώσεως* depends upon *διὰ* or upon *λουτροῦ*. Bengel, followed by Alford, takes the former, "per lavacrum et renovationem;" the Vulgate (*lavacrum regenerationis et renovationis Spiritus Sancti*), the latter, followed by Huther, Bishop Ellicott, and others. It is difficult to hit upon any conclusive argument for one side or the other. But it is against the latter construction that it gives such a very long rambling sentence dependent upon *λουτροῦ*. "The *laver* of regeneration and of the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." And it is in favour of the former that the "laver of regeneration" and "the renewing of the Holy Ghost" seem to describe very clearly the two parts of the sacrament, the outward visible sign and the inward spiritual grace; the birth of water and of the Holy Ghost. So that Bengel's rendering seems on the whole to be preferred. *Renewing* (*ἀνακαινώσεως*); only here and Rom. xii. 2, and not at all in the LXX. or in classical Greek. But the verb *ἀνακαινώω* is found in 2 Cor. iv. 16; Col. iii. 10. The same idea is in the *καὶνὴ κτίσις*, the "new creature" of 2 Cor. v. 17 and Gal. vi. 15, and the *καινότης ζωῆς* of Rom. vi. 4, and the *καινότης πνεύματος* of Rom. vii. 6, and in the contrast between the "old man" (the *παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος*) and "the new man" (the *καὶνὸς ἄνθρωπος*) of Eph. iv. 22—24. This renewal is the work of the Holy Ghost in the new birth, when men are "born again" of the Spirit (John iii. 5). Alford is wrong in denying its application here to the first gift of the new life. It is evidently parallel with the *παλιγγενεσία*. The connection of baptism with the effusion of the Holy Spirit is fully set forth in Acts ii. (see especially ver. 38; comp. Matt. iii. 16, 17).

Ver. 6.—*Poured out upon us richly for shed on us abundantly, A.V.* Which (*οὗ*); viz. the Holy Ghost. It is in the genitive (instead of the accusative *δ*, which is another reading), by what the grammarians call *attraction*. Poured out (*ἐξέχεεν*); the same word as is applied to the Holy Ghost in Acts ii. 17, 18, 33, and in the LXX. of Joel ii. 28, 29. *Richly* (*πλουσίως*); as 1 Tim. vi. 17; Col. iii. 16; 2 Pet. i. 11 (compare the use of *πλοῦτος* in Eph. i. 7; ii. 7). Through Jesus Christ. It is our baptism into Christ which entitles us to receive the Holy Spirit, which we have only in virtue of our union with him. The Spirit flows from the Head to the members. In Acts ii. 33; 34 Christ is said to have received the promise of the

Holy Spirit from the Father, and to have poured it forth upon the Church.

Ver. 7.—*Might for should*, A.V. *Being justified by his grace*; showing very clearly that righteousness in man did not precede and cause the saving mercy of God, but that mercy went before and provided the justification which is altogether of grace, and which issues in the possession of eternal life. *Heirs according to the hope of eternal life*. This seems to be the right rendering rather than that in the margin, *heirs, according to hope, of eternal life*, making "eternal life" depend upon "heirs." The passage in ch. i. 2, "In hope of eternal life," is a very strong reason for taking the same construction here. The answer in the Church Catechism, "Wherein I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven," follows very closely St. Paul's teaching in the text (see Rom. iv. 13, 14; viii. 17; Gal. iii. 29, iv. 7).

Ver. 8.—*Faithful is the saying for this is a faithful saying*, A.V.; *concerning these things for these things*, A.V.; *confidently for constantly*, A.V.; *to the end that for that*, A.V.; *God for in God*, A.V.; *may for might*, A.V.; full stop after *good works*, and colon after *men*. Faithful is the saying; as 1 Tim. i. 15 (where see note). Here the faithful saying can only be the following maxim: "That they which have believed in God may be careful to maintain good works;" the words, "These things I will that thou affirm confidently," being interpolated to give yet more weight to it. Concerning these things; i.e. with respect to the things or truths which are the subject of the faithful saying. I will that thou affirm confidently (*διαβεβαιούσθαι*); see 1 Tim. i. 7. "Never be weary of dwelling on these important truths, and asserting them with authority. For such doctrine is really good and profitable for those whom you are commissioned to teach. But leave alone the foolish and unprofitable controversies." To the end that (*ἵνα*). It is not necessary to give to *ἵνα* the meaning "to the end that," in such a sentence as this (see note on ch. ii. 12). After words of command especially, *ἵνα* frequently, has simply the force of "that." So here, "lay it down as a rule that they which have believed God must be careful to maintain good works." If the sentence had run on without interruption, it would have been *πιστὸς ὁ λόγος ἐστὶ, κατὰ*. But the interposition of the *διαβεβαιούσθαι*, with the idea of commanding obedience, has caused the use of *ἵνα*. *Believed God* (*οἱ πεπιστευκότες Θεῷ*, or *τῷ Θεῷ*). The meaning is not the same as *πιστεῖν ἐν*, or *ἐπὶ*, "to believe in," or "on," but "to believe" (as Rom. iv. 3, 17 and 1 John v. 10, where the context shows that it is the act of

believing God's promise that is meant). And so here, the *believing* refers to the promises implied in the preceding reference to the *hope* and the *inheritance*. May be careful (*φροντισέσθαι*); only here in the New Testament, but common in the LXX. and in classical Greek.³ The word means "to give thought" about a thing, "to be careful" or "anxious" about it. To maintain (*προϊστασθαι*); usually in the sense of "presiding over" or "ruling" (as Rom. xii. 8; 1 Thess. v. 12; 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5, 12; v. 17). Here, after the analogy of the classical use, *προϊστασθαι τέχνης*, to "undertake," to "carry on," or the like, fairly expressed by to "maintain." The idea does not seem to be "to stand at the head of," or "to be foremost in." *Good works*; i.e. practical godliness of all kinds (see ver. 14). *These things are good*, etc. If the reading of the T.R., *τὰ καλά, κ.τ.λ.*, is retained, the rendering ought to be, "These are the things that are really good and profitable unto men, not foolish questions, etc., they are unprofitable." But the R.T. omits the *τὰ*. With regard to the interpretation above given of ver. 8, it must be admitted that it is very doubtful. But the great difficulty of the other way of rendering it, as most commentators do, is that it is impossible to say which part of what precedes is "the faithful saying" alluded to; and that the "care to maintain good works" is not that which naturally springs from it; whereas the reiteration in ver. 8 implies that "good works" is the special subject of "the faithful saying."

Ver. 9.—*Shun for avoid*, A.V.; *questionings for questions*, A.V.; *strifes for contentions*, A.V.; *fightings for strivings*, A.V. *Shun* (*περιπαύσο*); see 2 Tim. ii. 16. *Foolish questionings*; as 2 Tim. ii. 23. *Genealogies*; as 1 Tim. i. 4. *Strifes* (*ἔρις*); as 1 Tim. vi. 4. *Fightings about the Law* (*μάχας νομικάς*); such as St. Paul alludes to in 1 Tim. i., and are probably included in the *λογوماχίαι* of 1 Tim. vi. 4. *Unprofitable* (*ἀνωφελείς*); only here and Heb. vii. 18; but it is found in the LXX. and other Greek Versions, and in classical Greek (compare, for the sense, 2 Tim. ii. 14). *Vain* (*μάταιοι*); compare the use of *ματαιολόγοι*, "vain talkers" (ch. i. 10), and *ματαιολογία*, "vain talking" (1 Tim. i. 6). The whole picture is unmistakably one of the perverse Jewish mind.

Ver. 10.—*Hereticoal for an heretick*, A.V.; *a for the*, A.V.; *refuse for reject*, A.V. *Hereticoal* (*αἱρετικόν*); only here in the New Testament, not found in the LXX., but used in classical Greek for "intelligent," i.e. able to choose. The use of it here by St. Paul is drawn from the use of *αἵρεσις* for "a sect" (Acts v. 17; xv. 5; xxiv. 5, 14; xxvi. 5; xxviii. 22; 1 Cor. xi. 19; Gal. v.

20; 2 Pet. ii. 1), or the doctrines taught by a sect. The *heretic* is one who forsakes the truth held by the Church, and *chooses* some doctrine of his own devising (*αἰρεῖς*). The tendency of such departures from the doctrine of the Church to assume more and more of a deadly character, and to depart wider and wider from the truth, gave to the name of heretic a darker shade of condemnation in the mouth of Church writers as time advanced. But even in apostolic times some denied the resurrection (2 Tim. ii. 11, 12); others denied the Lord that bought them (2 Pet. ii. 1); and there were some who were of the synagogue of Satan (Rev. ii. 9); so that already an heretical man, drawing away disciples after him, was a great blot in the Church. **Admonition** (*νουθεσία*); as 1 Cor. x. 11; Eph. vi. 4. After a first and second admonition refuse (*παραιτῶν*); see 1 Tim. iv. 7; v. 11. It does not clearly appear what is intended by this term. In 1 Tim. v. 11 it meant refusing admission into the college of Church widows. If these had been persons seeking admission into the Church, or ordination, it would mean "refuse them." Vitringa (Huther) thinks it means "excommunication." Beza, Ellicott, Huther, Alford, etc., render it "shun," "let alone," "cease to admonish," and the like.

Ver. 11.—*Such a one for he that is such, A.V.; perverted for subverted, A.V.; self-condemned for condemned of himself, A.V. Is perverted (ἐξέστραπτῶν)*; only here in the New Testament, but common in the LXX., and found in classical Greek in a material sense, "to turn inside out," "to root up," and the like. Here it means the complete perversion of the man's Christian character, so as to leave no hope of his amendment. But this is not to be presumed till a first and second admonition have been given in vain. **Self-condemned** (*αὐτοκατάκριτος*); only here in the New Testament, not found in the LXX. nor in classical Greek. It means what Cicero (quoted by Schleusner) says of C. Fabricius, that he was *suo iudicio condemnatus*, condemned by his own judgment, which, he says, is a heavier condemnation than even that of the law and of the judges ('Pro Cluentio,' 21, at the end). Fabricius was self-condemned because he had left the court in confusion at a critical part of his trial. So the heretics were self-condemned by the very fact that they continued to head the schism after repeated admonitions.

Ver. 12.—*Give diligence for be diligent, A.V.; there I have determined for I have determined there, A.V. When I shall send Artemas, etc.* The action of St. Paul in sending Artemas or Tychicus to take the place of Titus in Crete is exactly the same as he pursued with regard to Ephesus,

whither he sent Tychicus to take Timothy's place (2 Tim. iv. 11, 12). He would not leave the presbyters in either place without the direction and superintendence of one having his delegated apostolic authority. This led to the final placing of a resident bishop in the Churches, such as we find in the second century. We may conclude that Artemas (otherwise unknown) was the person eventually sent to Crete, as Tychicus (Col. iv. 7) we know went to Ephesus (2 Tim. iv. 12). We have also an important note of time in this expression, showing clearly that this Epistle was written before the Second Epistle to Timothy (as it probably also was before 1 Timothy)—an inference abundantly corroborated by 2 Tim. iv. 10, by which it appears that Titus had then actually joined St. Paul, either at Nicopolis or elsewhere, and had started off again to Dalmatia. **Give diligence** (*σπουδάζον*); 2 Tim. ii. 15, note; iv. 9, 21. Nicopolis, in Epirus. The most obvious reason for St. Paul's wintering at Nicopolis is that it was near Apollonia, the harbour opposite Brindisium, which would be his way to Rome, and also well situated for the missionary work in Dalmatia, which we learn from 2 Tim. iv. 10 was in hand. Nicopolis (the city of victory) was built by Augustus Cæsar to commemorate the great naval victory at Actium over Antony. It is now a complete ruin, uninhabited except by a few shepherds, but with vast remains of broken columns, baths, theatres, etc. (Lewin, vol. ii. p. 253). To winter (*παρχειμεναι*); Acts xxvii. 12; xxviii. 11; 1 Cor. xvi. 6. (On the question whether the winter here referred to is the same winter as that mentioned in 2 Tim. iv. 21, see Introduction.)

Ver. 13.—*Set forward for bring, A.V. Set forward (πρόπεμψον)*; the technical expression both in the New Testament and the LXX., and also in classical Greek, for helping a person forward on their journey by supplying them with money, food, letters of recommendation, escort, or whatever else they might require (see Acts xv. 3; xx. 38; xxi. 5; Rom. xv. 24; 1 Cor. xvi. 6; 2 Cor. i. 16; 3 John 6). **Zenas the lawyer.** He is utterly unknown. His name is short for *Zenodorus*, but whether he was "a Jewish scribe or Roman legist" can hardly be decided. But his companionship with Apollos, and the frequent application of the term *νομικός* in the New Testament to the Jewish scribes and lawyers (Matt. xxii. 35; Luke vii. 30; x. 25; xi. 45, 48, 52; xiv. 8), makes it most probable that he was a Jewish lawyer. Apollos, the well-known and eminent Alexandrian Jew, who was instructed in the gospel by Aquila and Priscilla at Ephesus, and became a favourite teacher at Corinth (Acts xviii. 24; xix. 1; 1 Cor. i. 12,

and the following chapters, and xvi. 12). It is a probable conjecture of Lewin's that Apollos was the bearer of this letter, written at Corinth, and was on his way to Alexandria, his native place, taking Crete on the way.

Ver. 14.—*Our people for ours*, A.V. Our people also. The natural inference is that Titus had some fund at his disposal with which he was to help the travellers, but that St. Paul wished the Cretan Christians to contribute also. But it may also mean, as Huther suggests, "Let our Christians learn to do what Jews do, and even heathens too, viz. provide for the real wants of their own." To maintain good works (ver. 8, note) for

necessary uses (εἰς τὰς ἀναγκαίας χρείας); such as the wants of the missionaries (comp. 3 John 5, 6; see also Rom. xii. 13; Phil. ii. 25; iv. 16, etc.). The phrase means "urgent necessities," the "indispensable wants." In classical Greek τὰ ἀνάγκαια are "the necessities of life." That they be not unfruitful (ἀκαρπύ); comp. 2 Pet. i. 8 and Col. i. 6, 10.

Ver. 15.—*Salute for greet*, A.V.; *faith for the faith*, A.V. That love us in faith has no sense. "The faith" is right (see 1 Tim. i. 2, note). *Grace be with you all*. So, with slight varieties, end St. Paul's other Epistles. The T.R. has *Amen*, as have most of the other Epistles.

HOMILETICS.

Vers. 1-7.—*Mercy begetting mercy*. The practical lessons of the gospel were not exhausted in the preceding chapter, nor the motives which urge believers to godliness. The call to holiness in the last chapter was based upon the holy character of God's saving grace and the purpose of Christ's redeeming love. In these verses the grace and love of God are still the basis of the exhortation, but it takes its peculiar colouring from the thought of what we were ourselves. Tenderness, indulgence, and meekness toward our fellow-men are the duties to which these verses call us; and it is supposed that those fellow-men may be rough and evil-minded toward us, and provoking in their ways, and perhaps obstinate in evil-doing. The natural heart might be ready to speak evil of them, to contend fiercely with them, utterly to reject them as reprobates, to thrust them beyond the pale of hope and kindness. But stay! What were you yourselves when the kindness and love of God first appeared unto you? Were you walking in righteousness? Were your works the things which attracted God's love toward you? Nay! you were living in that folly which you now condemn in others; you were children of disobedience then as truly as they are now; you were deceived by sin then as they are now; you were the slaves of your own lusts then even as they are now; you lived in malice and envy then, both hateful and hating one another. But God's mercy found you out; God's love threw a veil over your sins; he provided a fountain to wash away your guilt; he sent his Holy Spirit to create in you a clean heart, and to renew a right spirit within you; he justified you by his grace; he made you his heirs, and gave you the hope of eternal life. And will not you have mercy upon your fellow-men? Will not you, for whom the Divine gentleness and patience has done so much, be gentle and patient too? Will not you humble in the remembrance of your own sins, and abashed at the thought of your own unworthiness, deal meekly and kindly even with unruly and sinful men, and cherish the hope that God's boundless grace may at last reach them, even as it reached you? Thus the doctrine of God's mercy toward men begets mercy from man to man, and the doctrine of grace is the strongest conceivable motive to charity.

Vers. 8-15.—*Pearls before swine*. There is in some a habit of mind utterly out of harmony with the Word of God. It is not that dogmas, or creeds, or ceremonies are despised and forgotten by them, as they usually are by the pleasure-seeking or money-making world. On the contrary, these things are often in their minds and upon their lips. But they handle everything, not with a view to growth in goodness, not with a view to the formation within of a humble, pure, and holy character, but merely as matters of disputation. They raise questions, the solution of which has no bearing upon our duty to God or man, but which only give occasion for strife of words, and utterly unprofitable contentions. The most solemn truths, the most sacred mysteries of the Christian faith, are only food for a wrangling, disputatious spirit. They are always ready to start difficulties, to suggest doubts, or to propose new forms of doctrine

in lieu of those once delivered to the saints. Strong in their own conceits and wise in their own esteem, they will not *learn*, no, not from Christ himself, but are always forward to *teach* some new thing. They value nothing which they have not invented themselves. They accept no truth which they have not adulterated with their own imaginations. Disciples they will not be. Masters they must be. When this habit of mind has clearly developed itself, the servant of God has only to withdraw from such. He must not be drawn into the whirlpool of vain jangling and unprofitable disputes. He must not go on casting his pearls before the swine. Silence is, in such cases, the best rebuke. When honest and gentle efforts to bring home to such persons the truths of God's Word in a reverential and practical way have utterly failed, and it is become evident that there is no desire in their hearts for Christ and his Word, it is time to cease from such efforts. "From such turn away" is the authoritative advice of St. Paul. Nothing can be in sharper contrast with the "unprofitable strivings" here condemned than the unobtrusive works of kindness, and active help to the furtherance of the gospel, inculcated upon Titus. Zenas and Apollos are to be brought on their way. Care is to be taken that they want for nothing. The Church in Crete is to be fruitful in good works for the wants of their brethren; and even the closing salutation is redolent of love and kindness. When Christians feel that the very essence of Christianity is unobtrusive love and kindness, shown in unselfish acts, and a readiness to help wherever help is needed, then will the Church be Christ's true witness upon earth; witnessing to Christ as the embodiment of the law of love, and witnessing to the Spirit of Christ as dwelling in her of a truth.

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Ver. 1.—*Political duties.* The apostle now turns to the duties which Christians owe to the pagan world around them.

I. THE NECESSITY OF THE INJUNCTION TO POLITICAL SUBMISSION. "Put them in mind." The words imply that the duty was already known, but needed to be recalled to Cretan memory. It is but too certain that the injunction was needed. Once a democratic state, now for over a century under Roman law, and always remarkable for a factious and turbulent spirit, the Cretan impatience of authority was reinforced by the spirit of insubordination which was such a characteristic of the Jewish part of the community.

II. THE DUTY OF SUBMISSION TO CONSTITUTED AUTHORITY. "Put them in mind to be subject to authorities, to powers, to obey the magistrate, to be ready towards every good work." The very redundancy of words used here is significant, as if to exclude the possibility of an evasion of the command. 1. *Government is of God.* "The powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom. xiii. 1; 1 Pet. ii. 13). 2. *The form of government does not affect the duty of obedience.* Monarchies, republics, oligarchies, have in them alike the ordination and power of God for the welfare of society. 3. *There are limits to this obedience, but the apostle does not fix them.* The exceptional cases are not mentioned, because they are summed up either in the primary law of self-preservation, which is antecedent to all government, or in the supremacy of conscience, which must always obey God rather than men. A king may become insane and murder his subjects, but the first principles of nature justify their resort to force in self-protection (Acts v. 29; iv. 9, 20). The king may command his subjects to practise idolatry. In that case, if the Christian cannot resist, he must die.

III. POLITICAL DUTY IN THE CASE OF CHRISTIANS INCLUDES MORE THAN SUBMISSION. They must be "ready toward every good work." As the magistrate is appointed to be a terror to evil-doers and the praise of them that do well (Rom. xiii. 3), the disposition of Christian subjects to every good work has a tendency to make government easy and light.—T. C.

Ver. 2.—*The right deportment of Christians toward all men.* It is described first negatively, then positively.

I. THEY MUST NOT BE REVILERS. "To speak evil of no man." 1. *What evils spring from the wrong use of the tongue!* "It is an unruly evil" (Jas. iii. 8). 2. *If the evil*

we speak of others is false, we are slanderers; if it is true, we sin against charity. It usually betokens a malignant spirit. 3. *It is to forget the example of Christ*—"who, when he was reviled, reviled not again;" and the precepts of Christ, who taught us "to love our enemies." Let Christians, therefore, guard their tongues, and let their words be few and well-ordered.

II. THEY MUST NOT BE CONTENTIOUS. "No brawlers." 1. *Such a disposition mars the influence of Christian people.* 2. *It is inconsistent with the spirit of him who did not strive, nor was his voice heard in the streets.* 3. *It leads to unseemly retaliations from the world, to the dishonour of Christ.*

III. THEY MUST BE FORBEARING. "But gentle." It suggests the idea of giving way, of taking wrong rather than of revenging the injuries we receive.

IV. THEY MUST BE MECK TO ALL MEN. "Showing all meekness to all men." 1. *Meekness is a fruit of the Spirit.* (Gal. v. 22.) 2. *It is precious in God's sight.* (1 Pet. iii. 4.) 3. *It is a characteristic of true wisdom.* (Jas. iii. 17.) 4. *It is necessary to a Christian walk.* (Eph. iv. 1, 2.) 5. *It is specially needed in our conduct toward our fellow-men* (Jas. iii. 13); in our efforts to restore the erring (Gal. vi. 1) and to instruct opposers (2 Tim. ii. 24, 25).—T. C.

Ver. 3.—*An humiliating retrospect.* The apostle adds, as a reason for the duties first specified, that "we also," including himself with the Gentile Christians, were once in a similar condition to the heathen, and had received mercy. It is a dark picture of men in their natural state, proceeding from a description of the inward source to the outward facts of this evil life.

I. HUMAN NATURE DEPICTED AS TO ITS MORE INWARD CHARACTER. "For we ourselves" were once foolish. 1. *It is foolish.* As wisdom is the choice of proper means of attaining our ends, so folly must be the direct contrary. (1) The fool despises instruction and wisdom, and hates knowledge (Prov. i. 7, 22). (2) He walks in the darkness of a false education (Eccles. ii. 14). (3) He is self-sufficient and self-confident (Prov. xiv. 8, 16). (4) He is a self-deceiver (Prov. xiv. 8). (5) He makes a mock at sin (Prov. xiv. 9). 2. *It is disobedient.* The word implies that the root of all true obedience is faith. Human nature is without faith, and is therefore disobedient. (1) Disobedience forfeits God's favour (1 Sam. xiii. 14). (2) Provokes his anger (Ps. lxxviii. 10, 40). (3) Forfeits promised blessings (Josh. v. 6). (4) Brings a curse (Deut. xi. 28). (5) There are many warnings against it (Jer. xii. 17). 3. *It is deceived.* Because it is separated from Christ, who is the Light of the world. It is easily led astray by all sorts of delusion. It has no pole-star or compass to steer by, and is therefore in constant danger of shipwreck. It is deceived by itself as well as by the devil.

II. HUMAN NATURE DEPICTED AS TO ITS MORE OUTWARD CHARACTER. 1. *Its service was impure.* "Serving divers lusts and pleasures." This was the character of heathen life in an island like Crete, where the propensities of human nature would have free scope. The pleasures of this life were of a sinful and debasing nature. Such a service was bondage (Rom. vi. 6, 16; xvi. 18). 2. *It implied a life of malice.* (1) The wicked speak with malice (3 John 10). (2) Are filled with it (Rom. i. 29). (3) Visit the saints with it (Ps. lxxxiii. 3). (4) God requites it (Isa. x. 14). 3. *It implied a life of envy.* (1) Envy is a work of the flesh (Gal. v. 21). (2) The wicked are full of it (Rom. i. 29). (3) It leads to every evil work (Jas. iii. 16). (4) It is hurtful to its possessors (Job v. 2). (5) It will be punished (Ps. cvi. 16, 17). 4. *It implies hatefulness.* "Hateful;" that is, possessing the qualities that excite hatred and dislike. 5. *It implies a return of hate for hate.* "Hating one another." (1) It is characteristic of those without love to God (1 John ii. 9, 11). (2) It is a work of the flesh (Gal. v. 21). (3) It stirs up strife (Prov. x. 12). (4) It embitters life (Prov. xv. 17). (5) It will be punished (Ps. xxxiv. 21).—T. C.

Vers. 4—7.—*The origin, nature, means, and end of salvation.* The apostle reflects that he and other believers had no excuse for treating the heathen with haughtiness, since it was owing to no merit of his or theirs that their own lives had become purer.

I. THE MANIFESTATION OF THE DIVINE GOODNESS AND LOVE TO MAN. "But when the kindness of God our Saviour and his love to man appeared." 1. *The time of this*
TITUS.

manifestation. The expression implies a definite point of time. It was "the fulness of the time" (Gal. iv. 4). (1) It was the period fixed in the Divine purpose from eternity. (2) It was the time of the probation of the Jews, ending in the most awful series of judgments that ever befell a people. (3) It was a time when the Greek tongue and the Roman arms made a highway for the gospel. (4) It was a time when pagan thought had exhausted every experiment in the art of living, to find that all was "vanity and vexation of spirit." (5) Yet it is not implied that the manifestation of Divine kindness had not been enjoyed already in pre-Christian ages; for it was in virtue of this manifestation, in the fulness of times, that God's love flowed forth in blessing during Jewish ages. 2. *The nature of this manifestation.* (1) It was a manifestation of kindness and love to man. (a) Kindness is the more general term, unlimited, undefined, all-embracing, touching the whole creation. (b) Love to man is his special and distinguishing love to the children of men as distinct from angels. (2) It was the love of the Father—"our Saviour-God." (a) The title "Saviour," so often given to the Son, is here given to the Father, because he is the Fountain from whence flow all the streams of Divine mercy. The Son is "the Unspeakable of the Father;" for he "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son" (John iii. 16). The atonement was not, therefore, the cause, but the effect, of the Father's love. (b) This fact, exhibiting the mine of power and love in the Creator, greatly enhances the certainty and glory of redemption. (c) It is *our* Father who is our Saviour. Mark the clear relationship, in spite of all our waywardness and sin.

II. THE METHOD OF THIS DIVINE MANIFESTATION. "Not by works of righteousness we did, but according to his mercy he saved us." The Divine goodness and love were manifested in salvation. "He saved us." This salvation, procured by the obedience and death of Christ, has its origin, not in works of righteousness done by man, as entitling him to it, but solely in Divine mercy. Mark the conditions and the means of this salvation. 1. *The conditions of salvation.* (1) Not by works of righteousness. (a) We are not saved by our own works, even though they should be done in obedience to a righteous law (Rom. iii. 20; Gal. ii. 16; Eph. ii. 4, 8, 9; 2 Tim. i. 1, 9). (b) If we were saved in this way, Christ should have died in vain (Gal. ii. 21). His death would have been quite unnecessary. (c) Experience proves the impossibility of our being able to do the works of perfect righteousness (Rom. iii. 23). (2) The condition of salvation is Divine mercy. "According to his mercy." (a) God is rich in mercy (Eph. ii. 4). (b) It streams forth from the blood and righteousness of Christ (Rom. iii. 24, 25; vi. 23). (c) It was through the tender mercy of God that Christ, as the Dayspring from on high, visited the earth (Luke i. 78). (d) The pardon of sin is according to the multitude of his tender mercies (Ps. li. 1, 2). (e) Eternal life is the effect of God's mercy. 2. *The means of salvation.* "By the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he poured on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." The Greek word is "laver," as if to show that the reference is to baptism. (1) The washing of regeneration refers to the beginning of the spiritual process in the soul, as it is the Spirit who regenerates the soul. There is nothing in the passage to support the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. (a) The connection of baptism with regeneration no more proves that all the baptized are regenerated than the expression, "we are sanctified by the truth," implies that the truth in all cases has this effect, or that "the gospel of your salvation" implies that salvation always follows the hearing of the gospel. (b) As a matter of fact, believers in apostolic times were regenerated before they were baptized; therefore they were not regenerated by baptism. This was the case with the three thousand at Pentecost (Acts ii.), with Lydia and the Philippian jailor (Acts xvi.). (c) There is no necessary connection between baptism and regeneration, for Simon Magus was baptized without being regenerated (Acts viii. 9—24). (d) It is strange that, much as John speaks of regeneration in his First Epistle, he never connects baptism with it. He says that those who are "born of God" do righteousness, and overcome the world. Why should he mention these tests at all, when he might have known that, had they been baptized, they must have been regenerated? (e) The Apostle Peter shows us the meaning of baptism when he says that "baptism doth now save us" (1 Pet. iii. 21). How? "Not by putting away the filth of the flesh"—which is easily done by the external application of water—"but the answer of a good conscience toward God;" as if to show that such an answer,

representing the reality and sincerity of our profession, was separable from the putting away of the filth of the flesh. (f) The expression, "baptism for the remission of sins," does not imply that baptism is the cause of their remission, for in all the cases referred to the remission had already taken place before baptism (Acts ii. 38; xxii. 16). The baptism was a sign or seal of a remission already accomplished. Saul was a true believer before Ananias said to him, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the Name of the Lord." Besides, it was by calling on the Name of the Lord that his sins were washed away. *This is the force of the Greek construction. (2) The renewing of the Holy Ghost refers to the continuance of the spiritual process in the soul. Thus "the inward man is renewed day by day" (2 Cor. iv. 16). This points to progressive sanctification. (a) The renewed are the children of God, the heirs of the eternal inheritance. (b) The effects are the fruits of righteousness in our life and conversation. Thus there is a firm connection between the regeneration and the renewal, which cannot be said of baptism and renewal. Christendom is baptized, yet how little grace is manifest among its millions! (c) The source of this renewal is the Holy Ghost, who has been poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour. It was in virtue of the mediatorship that the Spirit was given, and still works in the Church of God. For (a) all salvation is by him; (s) the grace of regeneration is out of his fullness; (γ) the gift of God, which is eternal life, is through him.

III. THE END OF THIS MANIFESTATION OF DIVINE GOODNESS AND LOVE. "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." God saves us according to his mercy by regeneration; but the first effect of regeneration is faith, and faith is the instrument of our justification. There is no difference in the order of time between regeneration and justification, but regeneration must precede justification in the order of nature. Therefore the apostle here goes upon the order of nature. 1. *The nature of justification.* It includes pardon of sin and acceptance into God's favour. 2. *The ground of justification.* "Being justified by his grace." (1) Not by works; (2) but by the grace of the Father, who is the Justifier. It is by grace, because (a) it is of faith (Rom. v. 1; iii. 28); (b) it is by the death of the Son of God. 3. *The privileges of justification.* "That we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." (1) Eternal life is an inheritance; it is not earned by our obedience and our righteousness; it is a free gift. (2) We are predestinated to this inheritance in Jesus Christ (Eph. i. 5, 11). (3) The grace of adoption, which is linked with our justification, opens the way to our enjoyment of the inheritance. (4) It is an inheritance which is not yet fully enjoyed; for we are heirs "according to the hope of eternal life." (a) There are "things hoped for" held out to us through faith (Heb. xi. 1). (b) "It doth not yet appear what we shall be;" but when "we shall be for ever with the Lord," we shall actually possess and enjoy our inheritance.—T. C.

Ver. 8.—*The necessary connection between gospel doctrine and good works.* I. THE IMPORTANCE OF GOSPEL DOCTRINE. "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly." He refers here to the sum of the doctrine of Christian salvation contained in the three preceding verses. 1. *The doctrine of salvation is worthy of all acceptance.* "This is a faithful saying." This formula, contained only in the pastoral Epistles, points to some weighty truth which had become a watchword among the Christian brotherhood of early times. (1) There is a tendency in our days to decry dogma. The apostle always insists on its importance as the root-principle and moving spring of morality. (2) The saying implies that the heavenly inheritance just spoken of is no figment of the imagination, but ought to be accepted as one of the commonplaces of Christian belief. 2. *It ought to be confidently put forth at all times by Christian ministers.* "And these things I will that thou affirm constantly." This was the strain of all apostolic preaching, and it ought to be ours also. There is no true practical preaching which does not involve the exhibition of God's character and our relations to him in grace—the glorious Person of the Mediator in his various offices, and the work of the Holy Ghost in applying Divine salvation. "These things are good and profitable to men;" that is, these doctrines, for they lead to good works, and benefit men spiritually and morally.

II. THE DESIGN OF GOSPEL DOCTRINE. "In order that they which have believed God might be careful to maintain good works." The faithful saying of the apostle was not

the necessity of good works, but the necessity of the doctrines of grace being preached as the only method of producing good works. 1. *The apostle seems to anticipate a tendency of later times to exalt morality at the expense of faith.* The doctrines, he says, are the true fountains from which all good works flow. These are, therefore, probably called doctrines according to godliness (ch. i. 1); the wholesome doctrine (ch. i. 9). 2. *He sets forth the duty of all believers to be careful about good works.* It ought to be a matter of earnest striving, because (1) God is glorified thereby (John xv. 8); (2) because they are means of blessing to man (Jas. i. 25); (3) because God remembers them (Heb. vi. 9, 10); (4) because they will be an evidence of faith in the judgment (Matt. xxv. 34—40). 3. *He insists on their maintaining good works.* The word signifies that they must be excelling in them. (1) They must, therefore, be zealous of them (ch. ii. 14); (2) furnished unto them (2 Tim. iii. 17); (3) rich in them, and stablished in them (1 Tim. vi. 18; 2 Thess. ii. 17); (4) ready for all good works (ch. iii. 1); (5) provoking each other unto them (Heb. x. 24).—T. C.

Ver. 9.—*A warning against frivolous and disputative teaching.* This is in contrast to the sound teaching just referred to. "But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the Law; for they are unprofitable and vain."

I. THE THINGS WHICH ARE TO BE PLACED OUTSIDE THE SPHERE OF MINISTERIAL THOUGHT AND CONCERN. 1. *Foolish questions.* Questions not easily answered, yet if answered without practical bearing upon Christian life. Such were many of the Jewish discussions about the oral Law, the nature of God and the angels, the power of the Name Jehovah. In Christian times papists have discussed for a whole century "which side of Jesus was pierced by the spear?" Such are "foolish questions." 2. *Genealogies.* Jerome tells us the Jews were as well acquainted with the genealogies from Adam to Zerubbabel as with their own names. It is possible that the Jewish Christians attached great importance to their family registers. The genealogies, however, are significantly linked by the apostle with fables. 3. *Contentions and strivings about the Law.* There were many disputed and disputable points in the Law, especially respecting the authority and confirmation of the commandments (ch. i. 14).

II. THE ATTITUDE OF THE MINISTER TOWARD SUCH THINGS. "Avoid them." 1. *This implies that he is not even to discuss them,* on account of their utter frivolousness. 2. *The reason is that they are "unprofitable and vain,"* and therefore exactly opposed to the things "good and profitable to men." The apostle would deliver all ministers from such folly and trifling, by placing before them Jesus Christ, the one glorious Object of the Church's love and adoration, leaving questions of another sort to the dead. Such questions had eaten the heart out of Judaism. They must not be allowed in Christianity.—T. C.

Vers. 10, 11.—*The right attitude of Christian ministers toward divisive errorists.* "A man that is an heretic after a first and second admonition avoid."

I. THE TRUE NATURE OF HIS OFFENCE. 1. *It is not a case of fundamental or doctrinal error,* such as the words "heretic" and "heresy" came to imply in after-ages. Yet it is a mistake to suppose that separatist ways are not caused by divergences of judgment on some points from the settled belief of the Christian community. 2. *It was a case of a turbulent sectary,* dissatisfied with the Church, who withdrew from her communion to the disturbance of her peace. He would try to justify his course by a difference of opinion upon matters of doctrine, worship, or organization.

II. THE METHOD OF DEALING WITH THE OFFENDER. 1. *He was to receive two admonitions in succession.* He was to be twice warned not to pursue his divisive courses; he was not to be contended with, but rebuke was to be employed to recover him from his error. 2. *If his pride or his ambition would not allow him to yield to admonition, he was to be, not excommunicated*—the course adopted by the apostle himself in another case (1 Tim. i. 20); but simply avoided. There must be no intercourse with him. This was a virtual excommunication, for he no longer held the place of a Christian brother.

III. THE JUSTIFICATION OF THIS METHOD. "Knowing that he that is such is perverted, and sinneth, being self-condemned." The case is an utterly hopeless one. You must have done with the divisive sectary; let him alone. 1. *For he is perverted;*

implying an inward corruption of character, which steels him against all official admonition of the Church. 2. *He sinneth.* He errs knowingly, for his course has been authoritatively condemned by the messenger of God. 3. *He is self-condemned.* This does not mean that he consciously acts a part he knows to be wrong, but that he has condemned himself by his own practice, practically consenting by his separation that he is unworthy the fellowship of the Church, and thus justifying the Church in its rejection of him, or that he stands condemned by the Scriptures which he himself accepts as his rule of faith and life.—T. C.

Vers. 12, 13.—*Personal directions.* The connection of Titus with the Cretan Church was to be but temporary; therefore the apostle gives him two commands.

I. A COMMAND FOR TITUS TO JOIN THE APOSTLE AT NICOPOLIS. 1. *The apostle needed his services,* either at this city in Epirus, where he determined to spend the winter—no doubt in apostolic labours—or to ascertain from him the exact condition of the Church at Crete, or to send him forth on an errand to some of the other Churches. 2. *But the place of Titus was not to be left unsupplied.* Two brethren, Artemas and Tychicus, were to go to Crete—one altogether unknown by us, but, as he is first mentioned, probably a minister of high distinction and zeal; the other, Tychicus, one of the most esteemed of the apostle's friends (Acts xx. 4; Col. iv. 7; 2 Tim. iv. 12).

II. A COMMAND FOR TITUS TO HASTEN THE DEPARTURE OF ZENAS AND APOLLOS FROM CRETE. These brethren had been labouring in the Church there, probably, before Titus was left behind by the apostle. Zenas, the lawyer, was probably a Jewish scribe converted to Christianity, who had been acting as an evangelist in Crete. Apollos was the eloquent preacher of Alexandria, and now as always in perfect sympathy with the apostle, though there seemed a rivalry between them at Corinth. The apostle implies that the Cretan Christians were to provide the necessary help for such a journey.—T. C.

Ver. 14.—*A last reminder concerning good works.* The suggestion just made leads to this adjunction: "And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful."

I. IT IS AN INJUNCTION TO THE BRETHREN GENERALLY. "Ours also." It is the duty of all believers, sharers in the common faith, and heirs of the grace of life, to learn to do good works.

II. BELIEVERS NEED TO BE TRAINED TO THIS SERVICE. "Let ours also learn." They will learn it from the Scriptures, which tell us what is the good and perfect and acceptable will of God; and from the doctrines of grace, which teach us to follow as an example the Lord Jesus, who went about every day doing good.

III. THESE GOOD WORKS ARE TO HAVE A PRACTICAL BEARING UPON THE WANTS OF OTHERS. They are "for necessary wants." 1. *Not to atone for sin, or recommend us as sinners to God's favour.* 2. *But to glorify God by doing for others what he so abundantly does for us.* By adorning the doctrine of Christ by our beneficence; by putting to silence the gainsaying of foolish men, because they see we are "not unfruitful." We are thus seen to be trees of righteousness, bearing all manner of fruits. It is an interesting fact that, in the last inspired teachings of the apostle, he should have eight times enforced the duty of maintaining good works.—T. C.

Ver. 15.—*Salutation and conclusion.* "All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen."

I. MARK HOW THE EPISTLE, WHICH BEGAN WITH THE FAITH OF GOD'S ELECT, ENDS WITH GRACE AND LOVE.

II. MARK THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS ESTABLISHED BY GRACE BETWEEN THE WIDELY SCATTERED MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH. They are one holy, happy family, united by love. The threefold repetition of the word "all" suggests the deep unity of the body of Christ, in spite of its inward distractions and errors and sins.

III. THE SALUTATION IMPLIES THAT, THOUGH ADDRESSED TO TITUS, THE EPISTLE WAS TO BE COMMUNICATED TO THE WHOLE CHURCH IN CRETE.—T. C.

Vers. 1, 2.—*Subjection to the state.* Society has reached no ideal perfection in government, nor has God himself laid down any outward form as an ideal. All

nations are justified in variety of choice. There has been government by judges, and governments monarchical, republican, autocratic, and constitutional. All that we need to notice is that society needs to be *governed*. Lawlessness always ends in anarchy, misery, and desolation.

I. LEARN SUBJECTION TO THE STATE. This is beautiful. Restraint is better than the liberty of licentiousness. Compare a river that keeps its bounds to one that overflows its banks. Men are justified in resisting tyrannies, whether of autocrats or mobs; but they must not forget that all well-ordered societies exist only by *subjection*.

II. LEARN SELF-CONQUEST IN YOURSELVES. Controlling the tongue, avoiding all bitterness and "brawling," and showing that there is a magistracy of the *heart* as well as a magistracy of the *state*.—W. M. S.

Ver. 5.—*The mercy of God*. "According to his mercy he saved us." Mercy is the key-note of redemption. It is the music of the Psalms; the spirit of Christ's ministry, and the motive of the atonement. It is the very heart of God—as permanent as his justice and his righteousness; "for his mercy endureth for ever."

I. SALVATION IS NOT A SUPERSTRUCTURE OF MAN'S. "Not according to works of righteousness which we have done." Good actions do not make a good man; it is the good man that makes the good actions. If man is to be saved, he must have new life from *within*. Mercy meets his case. God's pity and compassion are seen in this. He gives the new heart that makes the new life, and so he saves us from self and sin.

II. SALVATION IS A DUAL WORK. This is "the washing of regeneration," the redemption that comes to the heart through the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. But the removal of the stain of sin is not all. The heart, however clean, is not to be a blank. A new likeness is to be brought out. So there is to be the "renewing of the Holy Ghost." We are made new creatures in Christ Jesus. God's likeness comes out again in the soul. We are made holy with God's holiness, and beautiful with God's beauty.—W. M. S.

Vers. 8, 14.—*Christian character*. "To maintain good works." This is a repeated counsel, and shows how much need there was of showing that the "belief" spoken of in the eighth verse should not be a mere speculative creed. This Titus is to "affirm constantly," showing that there were those then who had a tendency to antinomianism, or neglect of the Law of moral order and beauty.

I. PERMANENCE. "Maintain." Men weary of their efforts after the attainment of a Divine ideal. Holiness is not a gift, it is a growth; and a growth, not like that of a plant, which is unconscious, but a growth that involves obedience. Maintain "works"—give them continuance, by aliment and nurture.

II. COMPREHENSIVENESS. "Works." For life covers a large sphere. We are apt to forget that Christianity covers all spheres—the civil, social, moral, spiritual. For ages the Church was merely ecclesiastical. "The religious" were such as shut themselves out from the world, deeming its pursuits and duties below the dignity of a spiritual religion, which made the soul and its feelings and devotions everything. Now we have moved into a wider inheritance; we believe in the Christianization of common life; the consecration of art and science and common duty to Christian ends. We are simply to ask if the work given us to do is a good work, and we are to be earnest in "every good work." And we have seen that the tree must first be made good; for it is "the good man that, out of the good treasure of his heart, brings forth good things."—W. M. S.

Vers. 1-3.—*Duty*. "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers," etc. "Very careful," says Dean Spence, "and searching have been the apostle's charges to Titus respecting the teachers of the Church, their doctrine and their life; very particular have been his directions, his warnings and exhortations, to men and women of different ages, on the subject of their home life. But with the exception of a slight digression, in the case of a slave to a pagan master, his words had been written with a reference generally to Christian life among Christians. But there was then a great life outside the little Christian world: how were the people of Christ to regulate their behaviour in their dealings with the vast pagan world outside? Paul

goes to the root of the matter at once when he says, 'Put them in mind,' etc." We have here duty in a threefold relation—in relation to civil government, in relation to general society, and in relation to moral self. Here is duty—

I. IN RELATION TO CIVIL GOVERNMENT. "Put them in mind to be subject [in subjection] to principalities [rulers] and powers [authorities], to obey magistrates [to be obedient]." It is here implied, and fully taught elsewhere (Rom. xiii. 1—7), that civil government is of *Divine appointment*. "There is no power but of God," says Paul. That the principle of civil government is Divine is not only revealed but implied in the very constitution of society. 1. *Man's social tendencies indicate it.* Some men are royal in their instincts and powers, and are evidently made to rule. Others are servile, cringing in tendency, feeble in faculty, and made to obey. There is a vast gradation of instinct and power in human society, and it is an eternal principle in God's government that the lesser shall serve the greater. 2. *Man's social exigencies indicate it.* Every community, to be kept in order, must have a recognized head—one who shall be allowed to rule, either by his own will or the organized will of the whole. Hence man, in his most savage state, has some recognized chief. The principle of civil government is, therefore, manifestly of Divine appointment. We may rest assured that, civil government being of Divine appointment, it is for *good* and good only. Indeed, we learn that Paul's idea of a civil ruler is that he is a "minister of God to thee for good." But what is good? The answer in which all will agree is this—*obedience to the Divine will*. What is the standard of virtue? Not the decree of an autocrat, not public sentiment, even when organized into constitutional law; but the will of God. "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye." The civil government, therefore, that does not harmonize with his will, as revealed by Christ the infallible Logos, is not the government of which Paul speaks. Taking Christ as the Revealer of God's will, we may infer that the infringement of human rights is not in accordance with the will of God, and therefore not good. Also that the promotion of injustice, impurity, and error is not according to the will of God, and therefore not good. The Bible never teaches, nor does moral philosophy, that we are bound to obey laws that are not righteous, to honour persons that are not honourworthy. If we are commanded to honour the king, the precept implies that the *king's character is worthy of his office*. Some kings it is religious to despise and loathe. If we are commanded to honour our parents, the language implies that our parents are honourworthy. Some parents display attributes of character suited to awaken the utmost hatred and contempt. In like manner we are commanded to be subject to the higher powers, and the injunction implies that what these higher powers enact is right. The obligation of obedience is ever dependent upon the righteousness of the command.

II. IN RELATION TO GENERAL SOCIETY. There are three duties here indicated which every man owes to his fellows. 1. *Usefulness*. "Be ready to every good work." The law of universal benevolence which we see in nature, our own instincts and faculties, as well as the written Word, teach us that man was made to serve his brother; the grand end of each is to promote the happiness of others. No man fulfils his mission or realizes his destiny who is not an *altruist*, who is not ever actuated by regard for the happiness of others. Altruism is God's social law and is binding on every one; disregard to it is the source of all social disorders and miseries. "The soul of the truly benevolent man does not seem to reside much in its own body. Its life, to a great extent, is a mere reflex of the lives of others. It migrates into their bodies, and, identifying its existence with their existence, finds its own happiness in increasing and prolonging their pleasures, in extinguishing or solacing their pains." 2. *Charitableness*. "To speak evil of no man." "This," says a modern author, "imports more than to speak evil in the ordinary sense: it is to act the part of a reviler or slanderer; and when used of conduct from one man towards another, always betokens the exercise of a very bitter and malignant spirit. Titus was to charge the Christians of Crete to give no exhibition towards any one of such a spirit, nor to show a quarrelsome disposition, but, on the contrary, to cultivate a mild, placable, and gentle temper." There are evils of some sort or other attaching to all men, and in some men they are of the most hideous and heinous character. To ignore them, if possible, would be wrong; to feel them is natural to the pure, and, to denounce them is right. But to speak of them

before others, to parade them before the eyes of others, argues a base and malignant nature. Should occasion require us to speak of them, it should be in the saddest tones of tenderness, and even with compassionate indignation. 3. *Courteousness*. "To be no brawlers [not to be contentious], but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men." How much there is in society, how much in every department of life—mercantile, mechanical, and mental—one meets with to annoy and irritate, especially those fated with an irascible nature! Still, amidst the strongest provocations, courtesy is our duty, *yes*, and our dignity too.

III. IN RELATION TO OUR MORAL SELF. The apostle urges the duty of forbearance to what was wrong in government and society, by reminding them of the wrong in their own past lives. "We ourselves also were sometimes foolish"—we had no proper understanding of the true. "Disobedient"—indisposed to do what is right. "Deceived"—swerving from the true mode of life. "Serving divers lusts and pleasures"—slaves of impure passions, revelling in the sensual and the gross. "Living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another"—we once spent our days in the atmosphere of hate and malign passions. It is a duty which every man owes to himself to remember all the wrong of his past life—remember it: 1. That he may be *charitable towards others*. 2. That he may be *stimulated to efforts of self-improvement*. 3. That he may *adore the forbearance of God in his past dealings*. 4. That he may *devoutly appreciate the morally redemptive agency of Christ*. 5. That he may *realize the necessity of seeking the moral restoration of others*. Two things may be inferred from Paul's language concerning the past moral condition of himself and others. (1) The *possibility* of the moral improvement of souls. The rough stone can be polished, the unfertile soil can be made fertile, the wilderness can blossom as the rose. (2) The *obligation* of the moral improvement of souls.

CONCLUSION. Let us find out our duty and follow it, through storm as well as sunshine, even unto death. "After all," says Canon Kingsley, "what is speculation for practice? What does God require of us but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with him? The longer I live this seems to me more important, and all other questions less so. If we can but live the simple, right life, do the work that's nearest, though it's dull at times, helping, when we meet them, lame dogs over stiles." In the realization of our duty is our strength, our nobleness, our heaven.

"Yet do thy work: it shall succeed
In thine or in another's day;
And if denied the victor's meed,
Thou shalt not lack the toiler's pay.

"Then faint not, falter not, nor plead
Thy weakness: truth itself is strong;
The lion's strength, the eagle's speed,
Are not alone vouchsafed to wrong."

(Whittier.)

D. T.

Vers. 4—7.—*Salvation, not of works, but of grace*. "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared," etc. The great subject here is *salvation*. This includes the restoration of the soul to the knowledge, the image, the fellowship, and the service of the great God. The passage leads us to offer two remarks on the words.

I. THAT WORKS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS WE CANNOT PERFORM, AND THEREFORE THEY CANNOT SAVE US. "Not by works of [done in] righteousness which we have done [which we did ourselves]." What are righteous works? Condensely defined, works inspired ever by supreme sympathy with the supremely good. No other works, whatever their sacred semblance, whatever their popular appreciation, are righteous. Now, such righteous works we cannot render in our unrenowned state, because we have lost this affection, and the loss of this is the death and damnation of the soul. 1. *Could we render such works they would save us*. They secure the blessedness of the unfallen angels. 2. *Without rendering such works we cannot be saved*. Moral salvation consists in holiness of character. Character is made up of habits, habits made up of acts, and the acts, to be of any worth, must be righteous.

II. THAT REDEMPITIVE MERCY HAS BEEN VOUCHSAFED TO US, AND THEREFORE WE MAY BE SAVED. "According to his mercy he saved us." Observe: 1. *The special work of this redemptive mercy.* What is the work? (1) Cleansing. "The washing of regeneration," or the "laver of regeneration," as some render it. Sin is represented as a moral defiler, and deliverance from sin, therefore, is a cleansing. (2) Renewal. "Renewing." Sin is represented as death, and deliverance from it is, therefore, a quickening, a renewal. 2. *The Divine Administrator of this redemptive mercy.* "The Holy Ghost." No agency but that of God can either morally cleanse or renew. That Divine Agent which of old brooded over the face of the deep can alone morally recreate. 3. *The glorious Medium of this redemptive mercy.* "Through Jesus Christ our Saviour." Christ our Saviour is the Medium. Through him the Spirit came, by him the Spirit works, in him the Spirit is abundant. 4. *The sublime result of this redemptive mercy.* "That being justified by His grace, we should [might] be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." The word "justified" means to be made right—right in heart, right in life, right in relation to self, the universe, and God. What is it to be made right? To be put in possession of that spirit of love to God which is the spring of all "works of righteousness." This rectitude: (1) Inspires with the highest hope. "Hope of eternal life." What a blessing is hope! But the "hope of eternal life," what hope like this? (2) Inaugurates the highest relationship. "Heirs." We are "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ."—D. T.

Vers. 7, 8.—*Justification; faith; works.* "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs," etc. There are three subjects in these verses of vital interest to man which require to be brought out into prominence and impressed with indelible force.

I. THE MORAL RECTIFICATION OF THE SOUL. "Being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." This means, I presume, not that being pronounced right, but that being made right. Forensic justification is an old theological fiction. Those who have held it and who still hold it have ideas of God incongruous and debased. They regard him as such a one as themselves. "To be justified" here means to be made right. There are three ideas here suggested in relation to this moral rectification of the soul. 1. *All souls in their unrenewed state are unrighteous.* We do not require any special revelation from God to give us this information. Man's moral wrongness of soul is revealed in every page of human history, is developed in every scene of human life, and is a matter of painful consciousness to every man. We have all "erred and strayed from the right like lost sheep." 2. *Restoration to righteousness is the merciful work of God.* "Being justified by his grace"—"his grace," his boundless, sovereign, unmerited love. Who but God can put a morally disordered soul right? To do this is to resuscitate the dead, to roll back the deep flowing tide of human sympathies into a new channel and a new direction, to arrest a wandering planet and plant it in a new orbit. He does it and he alone. He does it by the revelation of his Son, by the dispensations of life, the operations of conscience. "Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living." 3. *There is the heirship of eternal good.* "Being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Eternal life must mean something more than endless existence; for mere endless existence, under certain conditions, might be an object of dread rather than hope. It might mean perfect goodness. Goodness is eternal, for God is eternal. Goodness is blessedness, for God is blessed. A virtuous hope is not hope for happiness, but a hope for perfect goodness. He whose soul is made morally right becomes an heir to all goodness. This heirship is not something added to this inner righteousness. It is in it as the plant is in the seed. Man's heaven is in righteousness of soul and nowhere else. No man can be happy who is merely treated as righteous if he is not righteous. Such treatment, even by God himself, would only enhance his misery. To be treated as righteous if you are not righteous, is an outrage on justice and a revulsion to moral nature.

II. THE ESSENTIAL FOUNDATION OF ALL TRUE FAITH. "And they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men." The basis of all true faith is faith in God. In *him*, not in *it*.

In *him*, not in men's *representations* of him. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is." To believe in him implies: 1. *To believe in what he is in himself.* The only absolute existence, without beginning, without succession, without end, who is in all and through all, the all-mighty, the all-wise, the all-good Creator and Sustainer of the universe. This faith in him is the most philosophic, the most universal, and the most blessed and ennobling faith. 2. *To believe in what he is to us*—the Father, the Proprietor, and the Life. "Not willing that any should perish." This is the faith that is enjoined upon us everywhere in the Old Testament and the New; not faith in infallible propositions, in infinite personality; not faith in man's ideas of God, but in God himself, as the Source of all life, the Fountain of all virtue, the Standard of all excellence. "Trust in him that liveth for ever."

"Not in priesthoods, not on creed,
Is the faith we need, O Lord;
These, more fragile than the reed,
Can no rest for souls afford.
Human systems, what are they?
Dreams of erring men at best,
Visions only of a day,
Without substance, without rest.
Firmly fix it, Lord, on thee,
Strike its roots deep in thy love;
Growing ever may it be,
Like the faith of these above.
Then though earthly things depart,
And the heavens pass away,
Strong in thee shall rest the heart,
Without fainting or decay."

(*Biblical Liturgy.*)

III. THE SUPREME PURPOSE OF A TRUE LIFE. "To maintain good works." What are good works? 1. *Works that have right motives.* Works that society may consider good, that Churches may chant as good, are utterly worthless unless they spring from supreme love to the Creator. "Though I give my body to be burned, if I have not love, I am nothing." "Love is the fulfilling of the Law." 2. *Works that have a right standard.* It is conceivable that man may have a right motive and yet his work be bad. Was it not something like this with Saul of Tarsus when he was persecuting the saints? We make two remarks in relation to these good works. (1) The maintenance of these works requires strenuous and constant effort. "I will that thou affirm confidently, to the end that they which have believed in God may be careful to maintain good works." There are so many forces within and without us to check and frustrate the maintenance of good works, that we require to be constantly on our guard to see that our motives are right. It may be that good works flow from angelic natures as waters from a fountain, as sunbeams from the sun; but it is not so with us. Their light in us is the light of the lamp, and to be clear and useful there must be constant trimming and feeding with fresh oil; for the streams to be pure, the fountain must be kept clean. We must "watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation." (2) The great work of the Christian ministry is to stimulate this effort. "I will that thou affirm confidently, to the end that they which have believed God may be careful to maintain good works." "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God," etc. In four other texts of Scripture we have "a faithful saying." The first is 1 Tim. i. 15, "That Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." The second is 1 Tim. iv. 8, 9, "This is a faithful saying, Godliness is profitable unto all things." The third is 2 Tim. ii. 11—13, "It is a faithful saying, If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him." The fourth is our text, "This is a faithful saying." What? That God makes men morally right by his grace. This is an undoubted fact. That God is the essential Foundation of all true faith. Who can question this? Or that the supreme purpose of moral existence is to maintain "good works." Who will gainsay this? Or that all ministers of the gospel should faithfully and constantly exhort their hearers to maintain good works. These, indeed, are all faithful sayings, and should be practically realized by every man.—D. T.

Vers. 9—15.—*The worthless, the pernicious, and the desirable in social life.* “But avoid foolish questions,” etc. The text brings under our attention three things.

I. THE AVOIDANCE OF THE WORTHLESS IN SOCIAL LIFE. “Avoid foolish questions and genealogies.” The “questions” and “genealogies” are referred to in 1 Tim. i. 4. The apostle characterizes them as foolish because they were of an utterly impractical nature, and consumed time and powers which were needed for other and better things. “Genealogies as found in the Books of the Pentateuch, and to which wild allegorical interpretations had been assigned. Such purely fanciful meanings had been already developed by Philo, whose religious writings were becoming at this time known and popular in many of the Jewish schools. Such teaching, if allowed in the Christian Churches, Paul saw, would effectually put a stop to the growth of Gentile Christendom. It would inculcate an undue and exaggerated and, for the ordinary Gentile convert, an impossible reverence for Jewish forms and ceremonies.” Old was the habit and strong was the tendency of the Hebrews to concern themselves about their ancestry or genealogy. A truly contemptible state of mind, this! What matters it whether we were born of kings or of paupers? “And contentions, and strivings about the Law.” The ceremonial law is here meant, evidently—the law concerning meats and drinks and holy days. “For they are unprofitable and vain.” How rife in Christendom have been in past ages, and still are, these miserable discussions, which are generated for the most part by the most ignorant and narrow-minded of the human race—mere “unfeathered bipeds” that Christianity has not converted into true manhood! The grand end of every member of the social realm should be “charity, that of a pure heart and of a good conscience.” The only true Christianity in social life is *altruism*.

II. THE EXCOMMUNICATION OF THE PERNICIOUS FROM SOCIAL LIFE. The former class—the irritating disputants about genealogies and ceremonies—are described as “unprofitable and vain.” They are a worthless class, doing no good whatever, but otherwise. The class we have here, however, is represented as *pernicious*, and to be rejected. “A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject.” The word “heretic” (*aipepukós*) occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. All heretics may be divided into three classes. 1. *The theoretical unbeliever.* They do not believe what others believe to be true and orthodox. Though bigots denounce this as the worst of sins, true wisdom justifies it. It says that uniformity of opinion is an *impossibility*—an impossibility arising from a variety in the faculties, education, and external circumstances of men. And not only an impossibility, but an *inexpediency*. Did all men think alike, all minds would sink into a dead monotony. “Every man should be fully persuaded in his own mind.” That, therefore, which the Church most fiercely denounces it should encourage and develop. There is more good in honest doubt than in half the creeds. 2. *The professional believer.* A heretic more execrable know I not than he who every Sunday in the great congregation declares his faith in creeds, and every day, not only ignores them, but denies them in his life. These heretics make our laws, rule our commerce, fill our temples, create wars, and swindle the millions. 3. *The practical disbeliever.* These are insincere. They do not act according to their innate convictions, their intuitive beliefs. They believe—and they cannot help it—that the greatest Being should have the most reverence, the best Being the most love, the kindest Being the most gratitude; and yet, forsooth, they live lives of irreverence, unlovingness, and ingratitude. These are the worst kind of heretics. And how are they to be treated? They are to be excommunicated. “After the first and second admonition reject.” They should be morally ostracized. “Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.” They are insincere men, and not to be accepted or continued in the circle of brotherhood. Whilst you have no authority to persecute them or crush them by force, you are bound to treat them as insincere men. Their own conscience condemns; they are self-condemned.

III. THE SUPREMACY OF PURPOSE IN SOCIAL LIFE. In all the changes in social companionship and scene of residence to which the apostle here points, he urges the aiming at one thing, viz. to “maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.” What the “good works” are I have intimated in my remarks on the preceding verses. They are works that have a right *motive*, a right *standard*, and a right *influence*. The grand end in the life of all rational and moral beings should be the maintenance of good works. The apostle intimates that this should be the aim :

1. *In all the events of life.* He was now despatching to Titus from his society two dear friends and fellow-workers, Artemas and Tychicus, inviting him to come at once to Nicopolis, where he had, in the use of his discretionary power, determined to remain through the winter. Moreover, he had requested Titus to bring with him Zenas the lawyer and Apollos. Apollos was a man, not only of distinguished learning and influence, but Paul's intimate friend and fellow-labourer. In all this Paul keeps the one end in view, viz. that they should maintain good works. "Good works," the culmination of all good ideas, good impressions, good emotions, and good resolves. "Show me your faith by your works." In a good character man can alone find his heaven and from good works alone can man produce a good character. 2. *In the presiding spirit of life.* "All that are with me salute thee," etc. Brotherly love was to animate, direct, and rule all their social movements and activities.—D. T.

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THE
PULPIT COMMENTARY,

EDITED BY THE
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PHILEMON.

Exposition and Homiletics:

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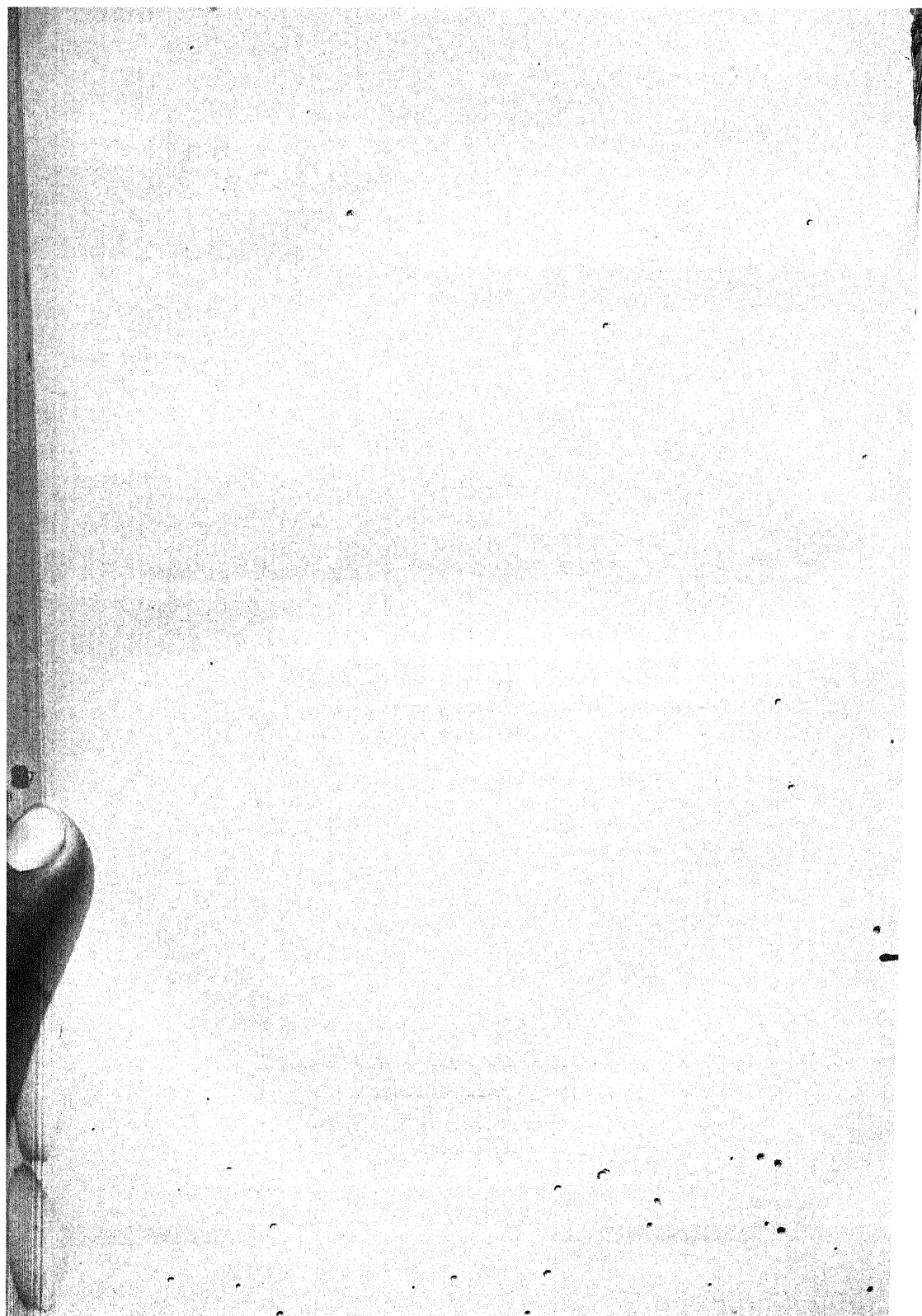
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THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO PHILEMON.

INTRODUCTION.

THIS brief letter is the only specimen preserved to us of St. Paul's *private correspondence*. It is, perhaps, surprising that no more of St. Paul's private letters have come down to historic times; for it hardly admits of doubt that he must have written very many. His vigour and activity of mind were so great, his affections were so warm and tender, and his acquaintances (not to say friends) throughout Asia Minor, Greece, and Syria were so numerous, that he could hardly fail to have correspondents in many lands; and we may be permitted to wonder that only a single letter should have remained out of so many.

Philemon (*i.e.* "a friend;" but the word occurs only as a proper name), to whom this Epistle was addressed, was a Greek Christian, who owed his conversion, it is inferred from ver. 19, to St. Paul himself. He was probably a native of Colossæ, in Phrygia, or at all events was settled there at the time when St. Paul wrote this letter to him. This appears (1) from comparing ver. 1 with Col. iv. 17, whence it appears that Philemon was of the same place as Archippus, and that the "ministry" of Archippus was in Colossæ; (2) because Onesimus, who was (ver. 16) a slave of Philemon, is referred to as "one of you" in the same Epistle to the Colossians (iv. 9).

It is an inconclusive argument that is used by Wieseler ('Chronologie'), that Col. iv. 17, where Archippus is mentioned, should be connected with Col. iv. 15, 16, and that therefore Archippus belonged to Laodicea; for these verses are evidently a digression or parenthesis. Yet it would seem that St. Paul himself had never been to Colossæ, and that his meeting with Philemon, and the conversion of the latter, must have taken place elsewhere (Col. ii. 1).

In any case, the question is one of small import, since Laodicea and Colossæ were neighbouring places, perhaps not more than ten miles apart.

Philemon was evidently a man of wealth and importance, whose household was large, and who was accustomed to exercise hospitality on a liberal scale. This is the only occasion upon which he is mentioned in the Epistles, but tradition asserts that he became Bishop of Colossæ ('Apost. Constit.,' vii. 46). Theodoret, Bishop of Cyrus in the middle of the fifth century A.D., states that the house of Philemon remained entire at Colossæ in his day ('Proem. in Epist. Phil.').

It is probable that Philemon was a layman. The apostle, indeed, addresses him in ver. 1 as "fellow-labourer;" but *συνεργός* is not in any sense an official designation. It is used in this very Epistle (ver. 24) of several persons, "Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas," respecting whom it is uncertain whether they or all of them held ecclesiastical offices of any kind; while in other passages it unquestionably denotes laymen (but see Exposition on ver. 2). It was rather a favourite word with St. Paul, and he uses it and its cognates sixteen times in his Epistles.

Onesimus, the slave of Philemon, on whose account the Epistle was written to him, was, as it would seem from the expression in Col. iv. 9, in which he is spoken of as "one of you," a native of that city. And this is probable on other grounds, since Colossæ was a city of Greater Phrygia, and the name of "Phrygian" was long a synonym for "slave." Its population had the reputation of being sullen and intractable, only to be governed by blows; and there was a proverb, *Phryx plagis melior fieri solet*, to which Cicero refers: "Utrum igitur nostrum est aut vestrum, hoc proverbium, *Phrygem plagis fieri solere meliorem*" ('Pro Flacco,' cap. 27). Onesimus means "useful," or "profitable" (Revised Version renders "helpful"). It is rather an epithet than a name, and is, at all events, such an appellative as would be easily bestowed upon a slave.

The notices in ecclesiastical writers referring to the subsequent life of Onesimus are few and brief. The 'Apostolic Canons' (lxxiii.) state that he was made free by Philemon, according to the request of St. Paul; and the 'Apostolic Constitutions' (vii. 46) add to this the further statement that he was consecrated Bishop of Berræa by St. Paul, and that he was finally martyred. An Onesimus, referred to in the first epistle of St. Ignatius to the Ephesians as their bishop (ch. i. Fr. Xav. Funk., 'Patr. Apostol. Opera,' p. 174), is in all probability another person.

§ 1. DATE.

We learn from Col. iv. 7—9 that that Epistle was brought to Colossæ by Tychicus and Onesimus; and our Epistle suggests in almost every line, though there is no distinct statement on the subject, that the same persons, or possibly Onesimus alone, were the bearers of it also. The date of this Epistle will therefore be determined by that to the Colossians (Introduction to which, see); and it will be sufficient to notice here that it must in all probability be assigned to the very end of St. Paul's first imprisonment at

Rome, viz. (the spring of) A.D. 62 to (the spring of) A.D. 64, *i.e.* the autumn of A.D. 63.

Some notice should here be taken of the theory (supported by Schulz, Schott, Böttger, Wiggers, Thiersch, Reuss, Schenkel, Zöckler, Meyer) that this Epistle, with those to the Ephesians and Colossians, was written, not from Rome, but from Cæsarea.

The evidence for or against this opinion is not very abundant, but, such as it is, it mostly looks in one direction. It is clear from vers. 9 and 10 that the Epistle was written during a long imprisonment of the writer. Now, the outline of St. Paul's career up to about A.D. 62 is clearly known from the account in the Acts of the Apostles, and there are in it only two long imprisonments—at Cæsarea, and that (the first) at Rome. If it does not date from the one of these, then it must from the other.

1. But (ver. 1) Timothy was with him when he wrote. Now, it would appear from Phil. i. 1 that Timothy was with St. Paul at Rome, but there is no trace of his ever having been at Cæsarea.

2. He was at Cæsarea kept in a confinement (Acts xxiv. 23) which, during the latter part of the time, was a close and severe one (Acts xxiv. 27), and this would at once hinder him from preaching the gospel, and render it improbable that Onesimus would come under his notice. No such difficulty existed at Rome (Acts xxviii. 30, 31).

3. There is not the slightest indication that at Cæsarea the apostle could have had any such expectation of speedy release as is implied in ver. 22 (Acts xix. 21; xxiii. 11; Rom. i. 13, 15). His imprisonment steadily deepened in severity towards the end. At Rome, on the contrary, the mildness of his treatment (Acts xxviii. 30, 31) might well encourage such a hope.

All the indications, therefore, point steadily towards Rome, as the place where the Epistle was written, and are thus in favour of the traditional view. Meyer's argument from the presumed order of the journey (Rome, Ephesus, Colossæ; or Cæsarea, Colossæ, Ephesus) is ingenious, but so precarious that nothing can be founded upon it. Colossæ was about midway from the sea, from one end of the road at Ephesus, from the other at Attalia; and it does not appear but that either might have conceivably been the route, even from Rome.

§ 2. OCCASION AND CIRCUMSTANCES.

These are entirely a matter of inference, and the essentially private nature of the entire incident renders it by no means surprising that no historical corroborations of them can be adduced. Onesimus had, it is not obscurely intimated, escaped from the rule of his master, and fled. Whither he went at the time must be doubtful; but at length he found his way, as it seems, to Rome. The number of slaves in Asia Minor, as in Attica, was very large. The Greek colonies in Asia Minor were long the chief sources of the supply of slaves, and they were chiefly obtained, no doubt, from the interior of Asia, which lay behind these colonies; just as

even up to the present day Egypt has been the chief slave-market, because the breadth of the continent of Africa lies behind it, and affords, or did afford, an inexhaustible supply of this human merchandise.

Then, as now, the trade of the slave-dealer was disreputable, but large fortunes were frequently amassed by it. It was customary to carry on workshops and manufactories by slave-labour, and as a mere investment of capital (Demosth., 'In Aphob.,' i.). The form of slavery, therefore, was somewhat more severe in Greece and Asia Minor than in Rome and Italy, where it was principally prædial or domestic, and on the whole milder in character. Hence escapes of slaves, and even insurrections among them, were not unfrequent; and manumissions were more seldom granted than at Rome. It was contrary to law to receive or assist a fugitive slave. He could not be legally sold by a new possessor; and to conceal him from pursuit was equivalent to theft (*κλοπή*, *furtum*). It is not, therefore, so improbable a circumstance as Baur seems to have thought ('Paul: his Life and Works,' vol. ii. ch. 6) that Onesimus should have escaped from his slavery, which it was a common occurrence for a slave to do, or at least to attempt; or that, succeeding, he should have then directed himself towards Rome. There may, too, have been momentary circumstances which determined the direction of his flight, of which we can now learn nothing. He may have been to Rome on some former occasion, or even have been sent there upon his master's affairs, and have absconded instead of returning. And it is not to be overlooked that a Roman connection is at least suggested by the name of the wife of Philemon (Apphia, *i.e.* Appia). Commentators generally assume the identity of the two names. But this conclusion is weakened, if not destroyed, by the fact that Apphia is a native Phrygian name, as Bishop Lightfoot has shown ('Introduction,' p. 372).

"All roads lead to Rome," said a mediæval proverb, and it is probable that, while travelling would be comparatively easy and unobserved on the main lines of communication, and among the crowds that used them, a runaway slave would have been noticed and stopped instantly had he turned aside into less-frequented towns. The stream flowed forward and backward from the provinces to Rome, and fugitives naturally go with the stream. So Onesimus.

Onesimus, however, whether he were *οικέτης* (purchased) or *οικότροψ* (born in the master's house), must have been of considerable value to his master, and his flight must have occasioned a certain loss to Philemon, though it hardly seems a damage which the apostle would think it right to assess or offer to make good, as he does in vers. 18, 19.

It would be otherwise if Onesimus had, at the time of his flight, appropriated funds or property belonging to his master, and it is not altogether clear how he could have made his way from his home in or near Colossæ to Rome—a journey of probably a thousand miles—without any funds at all, or even by the help of any *peculium* which he might have acquired. It has

not unnaturally, therefore, been supposed by commentators (Chrysostom, Scipio Gentilis, Grotius, Conybeare and Howson, 'Life and Epistles of St. Paul') that Onesimus had robbed his master; and the inference would seem to be well founded. St. Paul speaks as one in possession of the whole of the circumstances, in his two phrases "wronged" and "owes," and distinguishes accurately, no doubt, between various offences against his master which the repentant Onesimus may have confided to him. As a slave, he could not, indeed, in strict law, *owe* anything to his master, as the master could not owe anything (even the *peculium*) to his slave ('Gaius,' i., ii., iv.). But he might, of course, steal from him, and then would be liable for the theft.

In some way, St. Paul does not mention how, he and Onesimus met in Rome, and the latter yielded to the truths of the gospel. He was, perhaps, attracted by the winning earnestness of the great preacher's manner and conversation, and entered into personal and confidential relations with him. Very soon the apostle knew all the events of the young man's brief history, and had counselled him to make such amends for his wrong-doing as might be possible. Onesimus seems to have put himself entirely into the hands of St. Paul, who, on his part, must have felt all the responsibility of his decision. It was evident that Onesimus had ability which might be of great service to the Church and to St. Paul himself. A strong attachment had sprung up between the aged man and the youth, and St. Paul calls him by the unusual appellation, betokening very strong feeling (but it was St. Paul's custom to use strong and vivid expressions), of "my bowels," i.e. "my son" (Revised Version, "my very heart"). Yet, before all things, *what was right* must be done. The law, as it stood, gave certain rights to Philemon, and St. Paul would have been the last man to wish to violate the law. Onesimus, therefore, must return to his master; and his consent to do so is no small proof of the respect and affection which St. Paul had inspired in him. The resentment of a master towards a runaway slave would be hard to endure. St. Paul had no intention of exposing his penitent to this considerable danger without taking every means in his power to ensure to him a full and ready forgiveness. The sum of which, possibly, Onesimus had defrauded his master, the apostle gave his personal undertaking to repay. An opportunity was found, or made, for his return, in the approaching visit to the neighbourhood of the Ephesian Tychicus, who was a well-known and trusted brother, and had several times (Col. iv. 7, 8; Eph. vi. 21, 22; Titus iii. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 12; Acts xx. 4, 17) been the messenger of St. Paul.

The "letter of introduction" which was put into his hands is that which later ages have known as the Epistle to Philemon.

§ 3. CONTENTS.

To analyze minutely so brief and private a letter may well seem superfluous. It falls, however, naturally into five divisions.

1. Vers. 1—4: The superscription, comprising salutations to Philemon himself, to Apphia (probably his wife), to Archippus, and either to the whole family, or to a small assembly which met in the house of Philemon.

2. Vers. 5—7: The apostle thanks God for the good report of Philemon which he has heard, concerning his faith towards God, and kindness towards all his fellow-Christians. After this exordium, he introduces the specific occasion of his letter, viz.

3. Vers. 8—21: His intercession on behalf of Onesimus, which (vers. 8, 9) he has a right to make with much authority, because of his reverend age, and his sufferings for Jesus Christ; but (ver. 9) he does not command, he entreats as a favour, the granting of his request. Ver. 10 explains what it is, viz. a kind and forgiving reception of Onesimus, whom (vers. 11—14) he would have wished to retain with himself, but would not do this without the leave of Philemon. Vers. 15—17: The hopes there were of the young man's reformation and future usefulness. Vers. 18, 19: The apostle's promise that he will make good, if desired, whatever sum of money Onesimus may have wronged his master of. Vers. 20, 21: He expresses a friendly confidence in Philemon's ready compliance with his request, and that he would even go beyond it.

4. Ver. 22: He states his intention (which, however, it would seem was never fulfilled) of paying a visit to Colossæ, and asks, with the frankness of one who knows that his presence will be esteemed an honour and a pleasure, that a lodging (*sc.* in Philemon's own house) may be prepared for him.

5. Vers. 23—25: The whole of the rest of the staff engaged in the mission at Rome appears to have joined in the concluding salutations; Paul and Timothy at the beginning; Epaphras, Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, at the close; and thus associated themselves with the apostle's request. Ver. 25: It closes with the apostolic benediction.

§ 4. THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE EPISTLE, AND ITS SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS.

That this brief Epistle was written by the Apostle Paul seems the clearer the longer it is studied. Meyer does not at all exaggerate when he declares that it bears "directly and vividly the stamp of genuineness." And it is so brief that it enters not at all upon debatable ground. It has no directions for Church organization, such as are found in the Epistles to Timothy; nor warnings against Gnosticism, which are objected to as anachronisms belonging to a later age. Slavery belongs to all ages of the ancient world, and it is an incident in the life of a Phrygian slave that occasioned the writing of this Epistle. Nor does it travel scarcely, if at all, out of the sphere of the household, and of the simpler moral principles and human emotions. It moves in the plane of practical life; the doctrinal or devotional it barely enters.

It follows that the Epistle presents the least possible surface for attack; and even that it partially disarms the habitual objector. So persistent a critic even as Baur ('Paulus,' *in loc.*) acknowledges, with a touch of unusual

frankness, "In the case of this Epistle, more than any other, if criticism should inquire for evidence in favour of its apostolic name, it seems liable to the reproach of hypercriticism, of exaggerated suspicion, trustless doubt, from the attacks of which nothing is safe. What has criticism to do with this short, attractive, and friendly letter, inspired as it is by the noblest Christian feeling, and which has never yet been touched by the breath of suspicion?" It is evident throughout his treatment of this Epistle (pt. ii. ch. 6) that he is being driven by the exigencies of his preconceived theory to deny a genuineness which he secretly acknowledges.

It is the importance of the *niche* which this Epistle fills in the general scheme of St. Paul's life, as handed down by the Christian tradition, in "its historical and critical connection with the other Epistles which stand nearest to it," that arouse his hostility. He holds that the entire group of Epistles, which consists of those to the Colossians, Ephesians, and to Philemon, is un-Pauline; and since the testimony of each of these supports the rest, he dares admit of no exceptions from the sentence of rejection. Therefore he must regard Philemon as "a Christian romance, serving to convey a genuine Christian idea." No introduction to the Epistle can be said to be complete, therefore, which does not reckon with his doubts and those of his school, though his reasoning is somewhat forced.

1. *External evidence.* The character of its contents fitted it but little for quotation. The apostolic Fathers, therefore, present no reference to it; for the Onesimus referred to in Ignatius, 'Ad Ephes.' ii. and 'Ad Magnes.' xii. is probably another person, and in 'Ad Polycarp.' vi. the resemblance of phrase is too vague to rest upon. It is included in the Muratorian Canon, and Eusebius classes it with the received books (*δμολεγοούμενα*). Marcion received it as Paul's, and that without altering or modifying it—a circumstance which drew forth the criticism of Tertullian, that its brevity had been of advantage to it in one respect at least, that it had escaped the corrupting hands of Marcion. "Yet I wonder," he adds, "that, since he has received a letter to one man, he should have rejected the two to Timothy and one to Titus, which treat of the organization of the Church. He affected, I suppose, to alter even the number of the Epistles" ('Adv. Marcion.' lib. v. c. 21). It was sometimes placed thirteenth in order, before the Epistle to the Hebrews, but in other copies last of all.

Origen has repeated references to this Epistle (see 'Homil. in Jerem. xix. ;' 'in Matt. Tract.' xxxiii. and xxxiv.).

We find, nevertheless, by the time of St. Jerome, that there were already persons who argued against this Epistle, that either it was not written by Paul at all, or that, if it were, it contained nothing edifying. "Aut Epistolam non esse Pauli . . . aut etiam, si Pauli sit, nihil habere, quod ædificare nos possit."

Baur, unlike most commentators, argues that either the circumstances are altogether fictitious, or that, if they rest on a basis of fact, they have been freely treated in order to embody dramatically the idea "that what one

loses in the world, one recovers in Christianity, and that for ever; that the world and Christianity are related to each other as separation and reunion, as time and eternity;" and this he thinks is expressed in ver. 15. His arguments on the improbability of what he calls "a very remarkable concurrence of chances" are so evidently without serious weight that we shall not linger upon them.¹

But he further objects to the style as un-Pauline. The instances he gives, however, are not very substantial. When he says that *συστρατιώτης* (ver. 2), in the figurative sense, belongs to later writings, he means apparently that it is found in the pastoral Epistles *once* (2 Tim. ii. 3, *στρατιώτης*). The word appears to be somewhat rare even in classical literature. But it is found in Xenophon ('Anab.,' i. 2, 26), Plato ('Repub.,' 556 c.), and precisely in this metaphorical sense as here in Josephus ('Bell. Jud.,' vi. 9. 1). And as far as we can discover after search, the metaphorical sense cannot be said to be *popular* until a very much later age (see Eusebius, 'Præparat. Evangel.,' lib. xiii. c. 7) than it is possible to name for this Epistle. In ver. 15 *ἀπέχω* has not the sense of "have back," as Baur argues, which would be unexampled, but of "have fully," as in Phil. iv. 18 (see Lightfoot's note here). The fact that it was a having *back* again in the case of Onesimus is, so to speak, an *accidental* circumstance in this case. *Ἀποτίω, προσοφείλω* (ver. 19) and *δνῆμαι* (ver. 20) are, it is true, peculiar to the places where they occur; and while it is curious that so many *ἄπαξ λεγόμενα* should cluster in this brief Epistle of twenty-five verses, the character of its subject-matter, which is different from the usual subjects treated in the Epistles of St. Paul, fully accounts for this. It is a letter *upon business*, and as such it naturally contains *business terms*, such as these words are.

(2) In the consideration of the *internal characteristics* of this Epistle, the same over-subtle analysis and excessive suspicion of "tendency" seems to cloud and disturb the judgment arrived at by Baur and those of his school. It does not appear to us that to praise the Epistle as "invaluable" because it exhibits "the apostle's cheerful and amiable personality" is in any wise an accurate or closely fitting description.

Surely St. Paul's temperament was fervid, emotional, mobile, subject to great heights and depths of mood, and not what would be called equable or "cheerful." This characteristic is faithfully reflected in the Epistle before us.

It is a courteous and even affectionate communication from the apostle to one who, though bound to respect his official position, and under great personal obligations to him, was yet not *familiarly* known to him. He had to do a very difficult thing—to come between a master and his slave, to take what by some men and in some circumstances might have been

¹ For those who can accept it, a very easy way of avoiding these "impossibilities," such as they are, is presented by that hypothesis, upheld by Schulz, Schneckenburger, Reuss, Schenkel, Zöckler, Meyer, which assigns this Epistle, with those to the Ephesians and Colossians, to the imprisonment at Cæsarea instead of at Rome.

thought a great and unwarranted liberty. Did he *demand* the freedom of Onesimus by his apostolic authority, it might appear that he was magnifying his office overmuch. If he should put into too great prominence the spiritual obligations under which Philemon lay, the act would be ungenerous, and would go far to cancel them. Yet he could not send back the young man Onesimus to meet the punishment of a runaway—*flagellis ad mortem cæsus*.

The tact and skill with which all these opposite dangers are avoided in the letter before us is remarkable. The writer persuades without alienating, and wins his correspondent to obedience without seeming to demand it. At once the reverend senior, the confiding friend, and the persuasive suppliant, he requests on behalf of his *protégé* a favour which we can hardly doubt was as willingly and gladly granted as it was gratefully received.

The letter of Pliny to Sabinianus on behalf of the offending servant of the latter, has often been referred to as an exact parallel to the Epistle to Philemon, and is at all events a useful contrast to it. It is given below for the purpose of comparison:—

“To Sabinianus.

“Your freedman, whom you lately mentioned to me with displeasure, has been with me, and threw himself at my feet with as much submission as he could have done at yours. He earnestly requested me, with many tears, and even with all the eloquence of silent sorrow, to intercede for him; in short, he convinced me by his whole behaviour that he sincerely repents of his fault. I am persuaded he is thoroughly reformed, because he seems deeply sensible of his guilt. I know you are angry with him, and I know it is not without reason; but clemency can never exert itself more laudably than when there is the most cause for resentment. You once had an affection for this man, and, I hope, will have again; in the mean while, let me only prevail with you to pardon him. If he should incur your displeasure hereafter, you will have so much the stronger plea in excuse for your anger, as you show yourself the more exorable to him now. Concede something to his youth, to his tears, and to your own natural mildness of temper; do not make him uneasy any longer, and I will add, too, do not make yourself so; for a man of your benevolence of heart cannot be angry without feeling great uneasiness. I am afraid, were I to join my entreaties with his, I should seem rather to compel than request you to forgive him. Yet I will not scruple even to unite mine with his; and in so much the stronger terms, as I have very sharply and severely reproved him, positively threatening never to interpose again in his behalf. But though it was proper to say this to him, in order to make him more fearful of offending, I do not say so to you. I may, perhaps, again have occasion to entreat you upon his account, and again obtain your forgiveness; supposing, I mean, his fault should be such as may become me

to intercede, and you to pardon. Farewell" (Pliny's 'Letters,' bk. ix. No. 21, edit. Melmoth).

Pliny was a man of high rank and considerable culture; he was a professed letter-writer; he regarded it as an accomplishment to compose elegant epistles to his friends. But even so, how far is the letter to Philemon superior! The other haughty, curt, and frigid, not so much persuades his correspondent as a favour to what he asks, as demands it as a thing due to his condescension in asking. The one is based throughout on a religious motive; the other, on a casual and somewhat contemptuous feeling of kindness. In fact, the two letters are apt types respectively of the "friendship of the world" (Jas. iv. 4) and of the Christian charity that "seeketh not her own" (1 Cor. xiii. 5). Erasmus aptly observes, "Quid festivius etiam dici poterat vel ab ipso Tullio in hujusmodi argumento?"

It has been well said by Bishop Wordsworth that the gospel, "by Christianizing the master, enfranchised the slave." It did not pursue the method (far more imposing and showy indeed, but, as all history would teach, one sure to purchase temporary success by eventual failure) of at once declaring slavery unlawful.¹ That would have been to excite a servile war, to uproot existing institutions of society, and to make itself the occasion of unnumbered atrocities. Another was adopted which, if slow and gradual in the extreme, created no disturbance at the time, and brought about a permanent elevation of the class of slaves. To benefit the slave, it filled the heart of the master with the love of Christ.

For a long time, therefore, the ownership of slaves was not, in the Christian Church, held to be unlawful. As late as the time of Theodosius, as we learn from St. Chrysostom, there were wealthy persons who held as many as two or three thousand slaves. But Christian writers were constant in inculcating the duty of behaving considerably and humanely towards them (Clem. Alex., 'Pædagog.,' iii. 12). The laws of Justinian also introduced many ameliorations into the treatment of slaves, or more probably recognized those already accepted by Christian society. The barbarian incursions which brought about the fall of the Roman empire threw back the cause of the slave for a time, since these new-comers not only brought with them great numbers of slaves, principally Sclaves (whence our word "slave"), but brought into bondage many of the inhabitants of the conquered provinces. But at length slavery became altogether transformed into the milder form of serfdom—at least in Europe.

We may see in this letter before us the first stage of this beneficent process.

¹ "The word 'emancipation,'" says Bishop Lightfoot, "seems to be trembling on his lips, and yet he does not once utter it" ('Introduction,' p. 389).

§ 5. LITERATURE ON PHILEMON.

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THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO PHILEMON.

EXPOSITION.

Ver. 1.—A prisoner of Christ Jesus. He writes a private letter, as friend to friend, and therefore does not describe himself by his official title of apostle. Having to plead the cause of a *slave*, he begins by putting himself into a similar position as the “bondman of Jesus Christ”—“to obtain thereby the more ready compliance” (Chrysostom). By such a reverend bondage he beseeches Philemon, “and the bondage of Paul was liberty to Onesimus” (Scipio Gentilis). Timothy, etc. He was, then, with St. Paul at the time of writing; therefore at Rome; and this fixes the date of composition at all events before that of the Second Epistle to Timothy, when the apostle was again at Rome (2 Tim. i. 17; iv. 6, 16). Fellow-worker with St. Paul in promoting the spread of the gospel, either by his wealth and influence, less probably by preaching. The time *when* would be that of St. Paul’s long stay at Ephesus and its neighbourhood (Acts xix. 8—22).

Ver. 2.—Our beloved Apphia. Codices A, D*, E*, F, G, and N (Sinaiticus) read *adelphê* (sister) for *agapêtê* (beloved), and also Jerome, Griesbach, Meyer; which also has been adopted in the Revised Version. The name Appia, or Apphia, is either the Roman Appia Hellenized, which was the conjecture of Grotius (see Introduction), or more probably a native Phrygian name, from *Appa* or *Appha*, a term of endearment. The name does not occur elsewhere in Scripture. The word ἀδελφή is not unlikely to have been added by way of explanation. St. Paul has used it in five other places, and always in the same sense, viz. Rom. xvi. 1, 15; 1 Cor. vii. 15; ix. 5; 1 Tim. v. 2. Most commentators, and particularly Chrysostom, Theodoret, and Theophylact, among the ancients, infer that Apphia was the wife of Philemon. Otherwise, why mention her name here? Archippus; comp. Col. iv. 17, where he is said to

have received a *διακονία*, i.e. a ministry or service, in the Church. This word, when used without a determining genitive, denotes service to others in a general and undefined sense. But more commonly with some limiting word; as *διακονία λόγου*, office of teaching (Acts vi. 4); *διακονία τοῦ θανάτου*, office or function of death (2 Cor. iii. 7). The general view is that Archippus was the presbyter who ministered to that congregation which assembled at the house of Philemon, though Ambrose and Jerome, with other commentators ancient and modern, think that he was the bishop. Grotius, however, takes him to have been a deacon. (It is a very precarious inference that he was a son of Philemon and Appia.) Probably he was fulfilling a temporary mission only in Colossæ, and that would be the *διακονία* in the passage cited. Epaphras, a resident in Colossæ (Col. iv. 12), is spoken of as having been the founder of the Church there (Col. i. 7, 8), and as still being responsible for it (Col. iv. 13). Primasius calls Epaphras bishop and Archippus deacon; and so Grotius. It may be that these theories err in ascribing too rigid and technical a meaning to the terms of ecclesiastical service at this early stage of their employment. Epaphras was, however, at this time in Rome with St. Paul (Col. iv. 12, 13), and it is possible that Archippus was filling his place temporarily. It will be safer to call him (with Bishop Wordsworth) a presbyter. It is, as we have said, an unsupported idea of some writers ancient and modern (Theod. Mopsuest., Michaelis, Rosenmüller, Olshausen, Lightfoot) that he was the son of Philemon (but see below). Our fellow-soldier; i.e. of himself and St. Timothy, as engaged in the same warfare for Christ (1 Cor. ix. 7; 2 Cor. x. 4; 1 Tim. i. 18). The same term is applied in Phil. ii. 25 to Epaphroditus, and also the *συνεργός* of ver. 1. And to the

Church in thy house. Mede (so Chrysostom and Theodoret also) understands this as meaning "and to the whole of thy family" (which is a Christian one)—a suggestion quite worth considering. For a separate letter "to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colossæ" (Col. i. 2) was brought by the same messengers, and it would seem natural that, in a matter so personal to Philemon, salutations should be confined to his own family. The phrase is used more than once (see Rom. xvi. 5; 1 Cor. xvi. 19, which seems rather to point the other way; but especially Col. iv. 15, "Nymphas and the Church which is in his house," which, since it was in Colossæ itself, seems almost conclusive for that meaning). The *Ecclesia domestica* was very familiar in the apostolic times. Theodoret states that the house of Philemon was still pointed out as late as the fifth century.

Ver. 3.—Grace to you, and peace. The secular formula of salutation was *χαίρειν* (Acts xxiii. 26); in Latin, *multam* or *plurimam salutem aut plenissimam*. St. Paul's formula was almost invariably as above, "Grace to you, and peace" (Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 3; Gal. i. 3; and others). To Timothy (1 Tim. i. 2; 2 Tim. i. 2) and Titus (i. 4), "Grace, mercy, and peace."

Ver. 4.—I thank my God always. We ought, therefore, to thank God, not only for gifts bestowed upon ourselves, but also for those bestowed upon others. This is an habitual phrase of St. Paul (comp. Rom. i. 8; 1 Cor. i. 4; Eph. i. 16; Phil. i. 3; 1 Thess. i. 2; 2 Thess. i. 3; 2 Tim. i. 3). "It is to be noted that for the thing on account of which he gives thanks, he at the same time prays" (Calvin). For no good work is ever so complete in us that it does not need to be "continued and ended" in us by God. **Making mention of thee in my prayers.** The foregoing remark again applies. Grotius observes that "we learn from this that all addresses to God may be called *prayers* (*προσευχὰς*), even those in which nothing is asked but thanks are given." But this is apparently not such a case; the petition which St. Paul offered for Philemon being stated in ver. 6. And thus Chrysostom explains the passage. "Always" may be connected with "I thank," or with "making mention," preferably the former (Chrysostom, Theophylact, Calvin, Lightfoot).

Ver. 5.—Hearing of thy love, and of the faith . . . saints. He would hear of these instances of Philemon's faith and love naturally through Epaphras (see on ver. 2). Refer "faith" to "the Lord Jesus" and "love" to "all the saints" (a *chiasmus*, or cross-reference). Note that the phrase is *πρὸς* (i.e. *erga*, towards) *τὸν Κύριον*, but *εἰς*

(i.e. upon) *τοὺς ἁγίους*; perhaps because Christ cannot now be reached by bodily efforts, but only *aspired towards* by the soul; while the poor can actually be reached and ministered unto. "Ye have the poor always with you, but me ye have not always" (Matt. xxvi. 11). All Christians are called "saints" in the Scriptures, as Eph. i. 1, and invariably. What a reminder to them of their "holy calling" (2 Tim. i. 9)! Meyer notes, however, that it is not uncommon with St. Paul to vary the preposition (Rom. iii. 20; Gal. ii. 16).

Ver. 6.—Render thus: So that the community of thy faith [with other Christians, whom you may be able to serve] may show itself in act, causing full acknowledgment [from the world without] of every good work for Jesus Christ that is in you (Revised Version is not clear here); literally, *may become working*. Not a theoretical or merely quiescent faith. He was to *confess* Christ before men (and see Jas. ii. 22). "For whatever good thing is in us makes manifest our faith" (Calvin). **In you.** Bishop Wordsworth reads *ἡμῖν*, "us"—the body of Christians, following A, C, D, E, K, L, with many Fathers and versions.

Ver. 7.—We have great joy and consolation. The preferable reading is, as in A, C, F, G, N, and Revised Version, *I had much joy and comfort* (see ver. 5). "*Plenius inculcat et edocet, quare dixerit, gratias ago,*" etc. (Jerome). The bowels of the saints; *hearts* (Revised Version). Either (1) their bodily wants, the cravings of their hunger; or (2) their hearts and affections, supplied and satisfied by the good deeds of Philemon. This is another peculiarly Pauline expression (see 2 Cor. vi. 12; vii. 15—these two are very similarly used in vers. 7, 12, 20—and three other places). "*To refresh the bowels* is (in Paul) to be taken as meaning a lightening of troubles, so that they may rest with minds free from all sorrow and annoyance" (Calvin). **Brother.** How persuasively the sentence is turned! An old commentator remarks, "Paul does not yet come to his request, but prepares and softens beforehand the mind of Philemon" (Scipio Gentilis). This course of proceeding is exactly what Quintilian prescribes to an advocate, "*His velut fomentis, si quid erit asperum, præmollemus, quo facilius aures judicium admittant*" ('De Institut. Orat.' iv. 3).

Ver. 8.—Render: Although I have abundant freedom [boldness, or even licence] in Christ to enjoin upon thee that which is fitting. It was only *in Christ*, and by his authority as an apostle, that he could claim to come between a slave and his master. Secular warrant for doing so he had none. Such authority and licence, however, he

would not use on this occasion. He prefers to rely wholly on the respect and personal attachment felt towards him by Philemon, for the granting of his request, which he now proceeds to state.

Ver. 9.—*Being such a one as Paul the aged; a veteran.* Theodoret comments thus: "For he who hears Paul, hears the preacher of the whole world, the traverser of land and sea, the chosen vessel, and other things besides he is. . . . He adds also 'the aged,' showing the grey hairs which have grown during his labours." "Non ætatem, sed officium" (Calvin). *Presbutes* may mean "an ambassador"—"the ambassador of Christ Jesus, and now also his prisoner," as in Eph. vi. 20 (and see iii. 1 and iv. 1 of the same Epistle. A prisoner of Jesus Christ; i.e. for his cause. The apostle was in custody at Rome, owing to a long suspension of his trial, for causes not known to us. "Have regard for Paul; have regard for my bonds, which I wear as a preacher of the truth" (Theodoret). "Great reverence is due to those who endure sufferings for the most honourable causes" (Grotius).

Ver. 10.—*I beseech thee for my son . . . Onesimus; my child* (Revised Version). The name of Onesimus could not have been a pleasing one in the ears of Philemon. Note with what caution and almost timidity it is at length introduced. He does not interpose for the ingrate with apostolic dignity, but pleads for him with fatherly love. He puts himself side by side with him, and calls him *his son*. Some of the old commentators conclude, from Col. iv. 9, that Onesimus was a native of Colosse, and thence discuss whether he could have been a slave born in Philemon's house of a slave-mother, or whether he was sold in his youth by his father—a custom so common to the Phrygians (as to the Circassians in later times) as to have been noticed by Cicero.

Ver. 11.—*Who was aforetime unprofitable . . . to me.* The play upon words seems unmistakable, and is peculiarly Pauline. Onesimus means "useful," or "profitable;" ἀχρηστος, "unprofitable," and ἐχρηστος is emphatic, "very profitable." "Useful he is named, but in time past he was (I confess it) not useful, but useless; in future, however, he will be of great use to us both." Compare with this the corresponding passage of Pliny's 'Letter to Sabinianus,' given in the Introduction. "Unprofitable" is a figure of speech, a *euphemism*, for "useless and even injurious." St. Paul makes the best of Onesimus's fault that it will in justice allow. But an old commentator says bluntly that Onesimus was "damnosus fugā et furto." How could he have been, in his unconverted state, otherwise than "unprofitable" to his master? "Olim paganus," says à Lapide,

"jam Christianus; olim fur, jam fidelis servus; olim profugus, jam redus."

Ver. 12.—*Whom I sent back* [to thee, according to A, C, D*, E, N*] (aorist for present); but the decision reflects the struggle. It had not been altogether easy for the apostle to part with the youth, whom he might not see again. The whole Epistle is full of this strong and yearning affection. Thou therefore receive him. Do thou also act as becomes a Christian; receive him as my son. "Wonderfully efficacious this method for appeasing the anger of Philemon! For he was not able to rage or to do anything harshly against one whom Paul had called his own bowels" (Estius). A, F, G, and N* omit "receive," as also Tischendorf. The Revised Version omits this clause.

Ver. 13.—*I was wishing; I would fain have kept* (Revised Version). The story tells itself if we read between the lines. What steadfast adherence to principle on the part of the apostle, when the help of Onesimus would have been so welcome to him in his weak health, and his position as a prisoner! Philemon could hardly fail to think more favourably of Onesimus, when he saw how much importance the apostle attached to his services. In the bonds of the gospel. "Which I am enduring for the sake of the gospel" (see ver. 9)—a variation of phrase from ver. 9 (and cf. our Lord's words, Mark viii. 35; x. 29).

Ver. 14.—*But without thy mind I would do nothing.* The "would" of ver. 13 is ἐβουλόμην; the "would" here is θέλωσα. The former denoted natural but indeterminate impulse; the latter deliberate conclusion of the will (cf. Rom. vii. 15, 16). *Mind*; i.e. knowledge and decision. "Why was he unwilling? For many causes. (1) Because grave penalties were denounced by Roman law upon those who received or retained fugitive slaves. (2) That he might not seem to keep back something which was due to Philemon, perhaps to his injury; of which, perhaps, Philemon might have complained. (3) Because Onesimus himself chose to go back, in order that he might show conclusively that he had not embraced the Christian religion that he might withdraw himself from the power of his lawful lord. (4) That the gospel might not be by this means slandered, as if under the pretext of it slaves might withdraw themselves with impunity from their lords" (Estius and others). *Thy benefit—goodness* (Revised Version)—as it were of necessity, but willingly. Philemon would not really have had the choice of granting or refusing given to him, had St. Paul kept Onesimus still at Rome, and merely written to inform him of the fact. His consent might then fairly have been said to be *extorted*, not freely given.

This latter word is an *ἀπαλ λεγόμενον* (unique phrase) so far as the New Testament is concerned, though it is found in Numb. xv. 3 of the LXX., as in Xenophon and other classical writers. In Heb. x. 26 and 1 Pet. v. 2 the adverb *ἐκούσας* is found.

Ver. 15.—Therefore; for this purpose (final cause). Departed for a season. He was therefore parted from thee for a time (Revised Version). For ever; everlastingly (accusative, not an adverb). The relation of master and slave would have been in any case, and would still be, terminated by death. But it was now replaced by a new relation of Christian brotherhood, which would be permanent—a great advantage. So Calvin, Grotius, and many others. Meyer's objection does not seem of much weight (compare the *Perpetua mancipia* of Exod. xxi. 6; Deut. xv. 17). Baur thinks that in this verse he has reached the core of the Epistle—the ethical truth which it seeks to embody (but see Introduction: "Authenticity and Characteristics").

Ver. 16.—Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved. So great a difference had his Christian calling and profession made to him and to others. Both in the flesh and in the Lord. A *hysteron proteron*. The apostle is pleading on behalf of Onesimus this new bond of Christian relationship, which was in the Lord, that it should bring about a renewed fulness of personal relation. In the flesh, because "in the Lord."

Ver. 17.—If thou count me therefore a partner; if thou holdest me for a friend—by our friendship I entreat this. The strongest form of entreaty possible to be used. *κοινωνία* in Acts ii. 42 refers to the Holy Communion, and in 1 Cor. x. 16—21 partakers of it are plainly called by implication *κοινωνοί*—partakers, or, as we should say, "communicants." But here the sense is apparently as above; literally, a partner.

Ver. 18.—[But] if he hath wronged thee [at all]. It would have been needlessly irritating to Philemon to go into the details of Onesimus's offences. No doubt St. Paul had had an account of them from the repentant youth, but he had far too much tact to occupy himself and Philemon in the discussion of details. The hypothetic form avoids the whole of these. It suffices that he assumes the responsibility of repayment. Owes thee anything. As a matter of moral right at the bar of conscience. For in a secular court the slave could be neither debtor nor creditor, properly speaking, as against his master. This offence was probably embezzlement or purloining while in service. A, C, D*, F, G, N, read (*elloge*), reckon it to me.

Ver. 19.—I Paul have written—write it

(Revised Version)—with my own hand, I will repay it. Thus St. Paul took upon himself legally the repayment of the debt. "Prioribus verbis proprie cautio [a bail or security] continetur: his autem constituti obligatio. Hoc Latine dicitur pecuniam constituere: de quo titulus est in Digestis (*Αναδέχεται*) dicunt Græci" (Scipio Gentilis). Albeit I do not say to thee, etc.; "though I do not remind thee [while so saying] that thou owest even thyself to me!" Philemon owed to the apostle that debt of which the obligation outweighed every other—the help by which he had been led out of spiritual darkness and brought to the knowledge of the truth. St. Paul was (as we must conclude from this allusion) the "spiritual father" of Philemon—a phrase he himself uses in 1 Cor. iv. 15.

Ver. 20.—Yes, indeed, brother, let me have joy of thee. This word (*ἀγαπήν*) is from the same root as the word "Onesimus," and the apostle, *more suo*, relaxing into his friendly familiar manner after the grave and touching language of the last few verses, plays upon the word. Let me have profit of thee—let me have Onesimus of thee. In the Lord (comp. 1 Cor. x. 81). The phrase is twice repeated in this verse, and is very characteristic of St. Paul. But A, C, D*, F, G, I, read *en Christo* in the second clause. N has been altered, *χω* for *κα*, *secund.*; "refresh my heart in Christ" (Revised Version).

Ver. 21.—I wrote unto thee; write (Revised Version; see ver. 19), or perhaps referring back, as in ver. 19, to the request in ver. 17. The strong, fervid, and repeated appeals of the apostle had not been caused by distrust of Philemon, nor of their own efficacy, but were the natural outcome of the strong interest he felt in the case of Onesimus, and the desire he felt to replace him in the favour of his master; partly also, perhaps, to the warmth and fervour of his natural character, which uttered itself involuntarily in forcible expressions.

Ver. 22.—Lodging. There was this one additional inducement that could be brought to bear upon the mind of Philemon, viz. the expectation of speedily seeing him in person, and this, in conclusion, he uses. "I do not think that the apostle was so rich or encumbered with such great packages that he needed a lodging prepared beforehand, and was not content with a narrow dwelling-place, but thought the most spacious houses scanty for the accommodation of his small body; but that, while Philemon was expecting [the apostle] to come to him, he would the more do what he had requested" (Jerome). Meyer makes much of the improbability that St. Paul, starting from Rome, should bespeak a lodging in Colossæ. Yet he suggests that it was per-

fectly natural that, starting from *Cæsarea*, the apostle should take *Colossæ* on the road to *Rome*. But the one seems almost as probable as the other. The apostle, on his release, had, so far as we know, no definite plans; the cities of Asia Minor were familiar to him, and he would naturally prepare to go wherever the first pressing occasion, that of Onesimus, called him. *N* reads *ἀσκήσει*, "salutes."

Vers. 23, 24.—*Salute*. The salutations correspond generally to those with which the Epistle to the Colossians closes, but they are fuller, as is natural, in the longer Epistle. The order is in—

<i>Colossians :</i>	<i>Philemon :</i>
Tychicus	Epaphras
Onesimus	Marcus
Aristarchus	Aristarchus
Marcus	Demas
Jesus Justus	Lucas
Epaphras	
Lucas	
Demas	

My fellow-prisoner. The word occurs elsewhere only in Rom. xvi. 7, besides the paral-

lel passage in Col. iv. 10. As to Epaphras, see above. Marcus, having once forsaken the apostle (Acts xiii. 13; xv. 37—39), had now returned, and was with him in Rome. Aristarchus was "a Macedonian of Thessalonica," and had accompanied St. Paul in his memorable voyage to Rome (Acts xxvii. 2). Demas was now the "co-worker" of the apostle at Rome, but at a later period he had departed unto Thessalonica (2 Tim. iv. 10), and we know nothing of his subsequent history. Tradition (Epiph., 'Her.,' xli. 6) relates that he also apostatized from Christianity; but the apostle's phrase, though a strong one, does not necessarily mean this. Lucas (see 2 Cor. viii. 18).

Ver. 25.—*The grace*. A omits *ἀντὶ*. Theodoret has appended the following to his commentary: "It is fitting that those who have obtained the privilege of handing on the holy doctrine should so teach servants to submit themselves to their lords, that through all things Jesus Christ may be praised, to whom with the Father and the most Holy Spirit belong glory and greatness now and always and for ever. Amen."

HOMILETICS.

Vers. 1—3.—*The hallowing of the ordinary intercourse of life. The salutation*. Philemon's house had become a church, and the Church was in his house; thereby the household was made holy. Every household should likewise be made holy by the Christian profession and practice of its heads—the master and mistress. A profession of religion alone will not have this effect; there must be the daily practice of self-restraint, forbearance, Christian charity, and mutual love. Religion not wholly or chiefly an intellectual or doctrinal belief, though it is founded upon historical facts and shaped by the truths of the Creed. It is essentially practical; belief issuing in action—"faith which worketh by love" (Gal. v. 6; Jas. ii. 20—22).

I. NO KIND OF INTERCOURSE BETWEEN CHRISTIANS BUT IS CAPABLE OF BEING THUS HALLOWED. As e.g. that arising from the relations of husband and wife (Eph. v. 25—31; Titus ii. 4); of parents and children (Eph. vi. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 4); of masters and servants (Eph. vi. 5—9; 1 Cor. vii. 21, 22); of citizens bound to obey the governing power of the state in all things lawful (1 Pet. ii. 13, 14); of friends and equals (John xiii. 34; 1 Cor. viii. 13); of rich persons and poor persons, unequal in worldly station, but brethren, nothing less than brethren, as they can be nothing more, in Christ (Jas. ii. 6—9).

II. HOW THESE RELATIONS ARE TO BE HALLOWED. 1. Speaking generally, by the practice of religious principles. But specifically, by restraining the natural selfishness of human hearts. Love draws people together; selfishness separates them—isolates each in the pursuing of his own objects: "All seek their own, and not the things which are Jesus Christ's." 2. By the endeavour to restrain the tongue from speaking evil (Ps. xxxiv. 13). Angry words, retorts reckless of truth and only meant to wound the hearer, scandal, angry and inconsiderate words to dependents,—what frequent occasions of sin are these! The tongue is the great medium of social intercourse, and it must be brought under control, if that is to be hallowed (Jas. iii. 5, 6). 3. The family relation is hallowed especially by family prayer. God dwells in an especial manner in the homes where he has been thus invoked by the family as a whole. Family prayer at once the expression of the Christian character and the means of preserving it and making it purer.

Vers. 3.—*The Christian family.* The family of Philemon was Christian, doubtless, both in profession and practice. Many families at the present day are Christian in profession, but not in practice. The family really Christian may be known (like the individual) by its fruits (Matt. vii. 20).

I. IN IT GOD'S NAME IS HONOURED. He is habitually regarded and spoken of as the Giver of all the family happiness, and of whatever measure of prosperity it enjoys. The parents have received from him their children as a charge to be brought up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Children recognize without hesitation the duty of obedience as paramount to all self-pleasing (Eph. vi. 1).

II. IN IT, THEREFORE, THE LAW OF GOD IS RECOGNIZED AS THE GUIDE OF LIFE by both parents and children.

III. IN IT (that is, by its members) THE PUBLIC OBSERVANCES OF RELIGION ARE DILIGENTLY KEPT. The *habits* of the household are so arranged as not to put unnecessary hindrance in the way of either the family or servants attending public worship at the proper times. Unnecessary labour on Sunday is not required, nor even permitted.

IV. IN IT, FURTHERMORE, GOD IS WILLINGLY ENTRUSTED WITH ITS DESTINIES. "In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. iv. 6), and, as the correlative of this, "be careful for nothing;" that is, anxious and distressed about it. These are the rules which have been found of sovereign power in the Christian family.

V. As the law of God is in it the restraining rule, so THE LOVE OF GOD IS THE INSPIRING MOTIVE. "Followers of God, *as dear children*" (Eph. v. 1), not performing the mechanical and enforced obedience of the slave, nor even merely the habitual obedience which can be instilled by education and training; but the free, unforced, willing, elastic service which is prompted by the love of a child.

VI. Lastly, IN THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY CHARITY IS TAUGHT BY PRECEPT AND BY EXAMPLE. The voice of *slander* is not heard in it. The elders are not "weary in well-doing," and the younger learn (1 John iii. 17) that to help those who have need is to have something of the likeness of God, and to act under the direction of God's good Spirit.

Vers. 4, 5.—*The constituent parts of acceptable prayer: thanksgiving, intercession, personal petitions.* 1. An example of these here, *incidentally* given, not *purposely*, in St. Paul's practice with regard to Philemon. He was not familiarly known to the apostle. Perhaps it was with a certain surprise he learned that the great apostle habitually "made mention of him" in his prayers. In like manner, many Christians are being helped, without their own knowledge, by the prayers of others. *The apostle's example to be followed.* 2. *Thanksgiving a necessary part of prayer.* "I thank my God." If this be omitted, we are ungrateful, and so our devotion will not be acceptable to God. We must thank God for past mercies bestowed upon us and upon others. Our service is not really *devotion* without this, but the reverse. *A want of duty towards God* therefore a sin (Ps. cix. 7). 3. *Intercession for others.* "Making mention of thee always in my prayers." This the duty thrown upon us by our Christian fellowship. In this the "communion of saints" is shown forth. It is not to be confined to our immediate connections and friends. Philemon was not intimately known to St. Paul, yet he was remembered by him. *Prayer without intercession is selfish*, and therefore unacceptable to God. It may be that their too manifest selfishness of tone is the reason that many of our prayers do not obtain from God the answer they crave (Isa. i. 15). It ought always to embrace the whole Church of Christ, not merely that part of it in which we are immediately interested. This would have a reflex action upon ourselves, and would tend towards eventual union among us; for when the sympathies of the heart are wide, the sympathies of the intellect will hardly remain narrow. 4. *Petitions for our personal needs* are never likely to be absent from our prayers. The danger will be that they should form too large a part of them. They need to be restrained and regulated, not indulged. As the Christian grows in saintliness, his prayers for self will come to be more and more for *spiritual* blessings instead of *temporal*. At length they will be merged in the comprehensive petition that God's will may be done in the petitioner, and his Name glorified. 5. To cease analysis,

and take a complete view of prayer, we find it to sum up in itself all the sentiments which the human soul should entertain towards its Divine Creator.

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed."

Therefore gratitude, confidence, affection, hope, anxiety for others or for ourselves, penitence, should all in their degree enter into our prayers.² But *none* of these should *monopolize* them.

Vers. 5, 6.—*Man glorifying God.* Man is created *for* God's glory, and finds the highest end of his being, therefore, in glorifying him. Four ways may be distinguished in which he does this.

I. THE WAY OF GOOD DEEDS DONE IN HIS STRENGTH, which cause others to glorify him. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. v. 16). This is the mode referred to here: "That thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you." The mutual benevolence of Christians was thus to God's glory, and tended to bring others into the fold.

II. THE WAY OF WORSHIP—an ancient, universal, and proper way. Acts of worship are directed to God. That they may be really to his glory, they must be *for* God; that is, he must be, not their *object* merely, but their *end* (Manton). As far as secondary motives prevail in our worship, so far it is for those motives, and not purely to God's glory. The sole element to be reckoned in worship is the earnestness, piety, and sincerity of the worshipper. God is no *more* glorified of necessity by great outward beauty and splendour; he is no *less* glorified by the barest simplicity, if the devotion be equal. The accessories of worship are for man's help, and to assist man's feeble and purblind view of eternal realities; and are not otherwise to God's glory than as they are fit vehicles of man's devotion.

III. THE THIRD WAY OF OBEDIENCE. Man glorifies God when he becomes that which God intended him to be. He realizes by obedience the thought of God when he said, "Let us make man in our image." This was lost through the sin of Adam, and it is in process of restoration through the obedience of Christ, in individual Christians as they successively live upon the earth.

IV. GOD IS BEST GLORIFIED, THEREFORE, BY THE OBEDIENCE OF THE SOUL AND LIFE. Hooker says, "Should you erect to him a temple more magnificent than Solomon's, and load his altars with hecatombs of sacrifices, and make it perpetually ring with psalms and resounding choirs of hallelujahs, it would not be comparably so great an honour to him as to convert your own souls into living temples, and make them the habitations of his glory and perfection. For he values no sacrifices like that of an obedient will, delights in no choir like that of pure and heavenly affections, nor hath he in all his creation an ensign of honour so truly worthy of him as that of a Divine and God-like soul, a soul that reflects his image, and shines back his own glory upon him."

Vers. 8—10.—*The religion of Christ a defence of social order, not a disturbing force.* There have been religions which have been simply forces of destruction. Mohammedanism, when it was first preached, and even to this day, as far as its power extends, has the Koran in one hand and the scimitar in the other, and offers but the alternatives of conversion, slavery, or death. The actors in the French Revolution of 1789 strove to spread their new gospel of liberty, equality, and fraternity at the point of the sword. Communism in 1870, and Nihilism since, make war upon all that is old, and desire to destroy all existing social organizations to make room for their own schemes. These are destructive forces in human nature, and nothing more.

I. THE RELIGION OF CHRIST IS NOT ITSELF A SECULAR POLITY OR FORM OF GOVERNMENT. It does not, therefore, seek to uproot the social order which exists in any country. It, indeed, acts upon the individuals which compose the nation, and so in course of time transforms *from within* the institutions of the country. But it does *not* attack them *from without*; and therefore it is compatible with any form of government.

II. IT EXERCISES NO COMPULSORY POWER, NO PHYSICAL FORCE. It works through the *will* of the person addressed, and *leads, but does not compel*. That is the characteristic method of Christianity. Thus St. Paul *would not force the will* of Philemon. His apostolic authority would have warranted his speaking in a tone of command: "I might be much hold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient." But he preferred to *persuade*: "For love's sake I rather beseech thee."

III. THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION, THEREFORE, MAKES GOOD CITIZENS. "Fear God. Honour the king" (1 Pet. ii. 17). It expressly recognizes the ruling powers *de facto* as entitled to obedience, and as the representatives of the Divine principle of authority and government (1 Pet. ii. 13); as having the right, therefore, to be legally obeyed. It *inculcates* quiet and peaceful conduct, harmless, law-abiding, observant to perform contracts and obligations (1 Thess. iv. 11, 12), and directs each to be careful of the rights of others (1 Thess. v. 15; Phil. ii. 4). These are the characteristics of its true followers; and in all its system it keeps in mind the great objects of promoting peace and unity, of qualifying its people by the elevation of their personal characters for the fullest measure of liberty, and at length of eternal happiness. It is the surest defence of nations.

Ver. 11.—*Ungodly men are unprofitable to themselves and to others*. I. IS SIN, THEN, PROFITABLE TO THE SINNER? Whether the pleasures of sense or the possessions and honours of the world have prompted him to sin, it will be found that they alike issue in vanity and vexation. Should the desires *not* be satisfied, then the discontented appetite thirsts for more, and renders the man unhappy. If *it be* satisfied, yet it is a satisfaction of weariness, not contentment (Rom. vi. 21), and there is a sting of shame in the recollection of such pleasures.

II. "THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH" (Rom. vi. 23)—a penalty which must necessarily outweigh any apparent profit or pleasure arising from sin, however great it can be supposed to be. "What shall a man give [or, 'receive'] in exchange for his soul?" (Mark viii. 36, 37). Sin were unprofitable if we should only consider the ultimate consequences of exhaustion and satiety which it has on the sinner. When the judgment of God is taken into account, it becomes absolute and manifest folly. Two facts to be borne in mind: (1) man is accountable for what he does; and (2) he has an immortality of future existence in which to bear the penal consequences of his doings. Could the sinner have but a single sight of the awful fires of hell, he could never again doubt whether the sin which leads men thither were in any sense of the word *profitable* to any human being.

III. IS THE SINNER, THEN, PROFITABLE TO OTHERS? He is rendered unprofitable to others *in so far as* he is given up into the power of sin. Onesimus had been "unprofitable" (ver. 11) in time past to Philemon, because, under the influence of sinful motives (we do not know of what precise kind), he had sought dishonestly his own interest, not his master's. The dishonest person will cheat his master or employer; the deceitful person will deceive others; and they are thus "unprofitable" in various ways to those who are brought into communication with them. *Onesimus had become Christian, and his unprofitableness had disappeared*. He was transformed by the grace of God. Self-seeking, dishonesty, untruthfulness, need not thenceforth be looked for from him (although these were the usual vices of the slave). *He would be able to be trusted*, and therefore he was *profitable*. See the influence of Christian motives. He would be *faithful* to Philemon as to others, kind, preferring others to himself (Phil. ii. 3, 4).

Ver. 15.—*Treasures in heaven*. I. CHRISTIANS HAVE THE PROMISE, NOT ONLY OF THE LIFE THAT NOW IS, BUT OF THAT WHICH IS TO COME. (1 Tim. iv. 8.) Philemon had had before a legal property in Onesimus, which was, however, temporary, because it necessarily ended at latest with the life of either man. But in gaining the tie of Christian fellowship with him, he obtained an interest in him which would endure permanently; and so Philemon had, in a sense, "received him for ever."

II. THIS IS THEREFORE A TYPICAL INSTANCE. The world has only temporal and temporary treasures to offer; religion has eternal and abiding ones. "The things that are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor. iv. 18); the one has *time* for its sphere of action, and is bounded by *time*; the other has *eternity*.

III. SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND BLESSINGS ARE BEGUN IN THIS WORLD, but will not be fully possessed by the blessed until after the final judgment. They are an inheritance—"treasures in heaven." The Christian, as he "grows in grace," possesses more and more completely: 1. *Love and subjection towards God.* 2. *Love, sympathy, and forgiveness towards his neighbour.* 3. *Watchfulness and self-control over himself.* The apostle enumerates these spiritual blessings without classification (Gal. v. 23), as "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." The sum and substance and crown of them all is *righteousness*—an approximation, by the transforming power of the Holy Spirit of God, to the ideal of perfect manhood; that is, "to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (see Eph. iv. 13). And this righteousness prepares the soul for the presence of God (Luke xvii. 21). While other treasures, therefore, are possessions of the *body*, or at most of the *mind*, "treasures in heaven" belong to the *soul*, that is, to the immortal and permanent part of man's nature, and are to be valued accordingly.

IV. HOW ETERNAL BLESSINGS ARE TO BE DESIRED AND SOUGHT FOR. 1. *In preference to all other things*, because of their greater importance. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God" (Matt. vi. 33), and also vers. 19, 20, "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven," etc. 2. *With all earnestness.* "Strive to enter in" (Luke xiii. 24), as men who are so much in earnest as to be "violent" (Matt. xi. 12). 3. By the practice of graces given: of *faith* (2 Pet. i. 5), of *charity and almsgiving* (1 Tim. vi. 18, 19), of the *knowledge* of the Saviour and of heavenly things (2 Pet. iii. 18).

V. THE CHRISTIAN HAS THE GUARANTEE OF GOD HIMSELF that his hopes for eternal happiness shall not be disappointed (2 Tim. i. 12; 1 Pet. iv. 19).

Ver. 16.—*Christianity not permanently compatible with slavery as an institution.*

I. IT FOLLOWS FROM THE CONSIDERATION OF CHRISTIAN BROTHERHOOD that, although it finds many slaves, yet it shall gradually raise them to a state of freedom. It frees their souls at once. They become "the Lord's freemen" (1 Cor. vii. 22), and the body cannot always remain bound when the soul is free. Thus, though it does not cut down the tree (of slavery), it severs the roots, and a state of slavery cannot therefore permanently flourish among Christians.

II. THIS IS ALSO THE TEACHING OF HISTORY. It was an age of slavery in which this Epistle was written. Europe and Asia were occupied by an immense population of slaves, far outnumbering the free persons. In the province of Attica alone there were four hundred thousand slaves and only thirty-one thousand freemen. In Corinth there were four hundred and sixty thousand slaves. It was not uncommon in Rome (where the apostle was at the time of writing) for one rich man to possess as many as ten or even twenty thousand slaves. They cultivated the fields; they monopolized all the trades. It was an *age* of slavery. Into this state of society the gospel of Christ came. It did not, indeed, propose to break the bonds of all slaves, and reach the kingdom of God through social convulsion and much bloodshed. Its propagators did not preach a servile revolt.

III. IT PROPOSED NOT A TEMPORAL BUT A SPIRITUAL FREEDOM TO ITS FOLLOWERS. It recognized all alike as immortal beings. There was one Church for all, whether bond or free; and the same sacraments in which all should participate. Other forms of religion had treated the slave as a chattel; this alone regarded him as a man. It raised into activity the moral powers of his nature. He had been managed by the fear of punishment merely. But the gospel spoke to him of moral differences in conduct—of right and wrong; it awoke in his soul an inspiring hope. It predicted a day of judgment, in which the difference between a good and evil life should have the most momentous consequences to each individual. Thus it transformed the slave altogether. He began to look before and after; to raise his thoughts, his hopes, and his voice to heaven; and to understand what was the "liberty wherewith Christ had made him [though a slave] free" (Gal. v. 1), even "the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. viii. 21).

IV. TO THE MASTER ALSO THE VERY SAME ENDS WERE PROPOSED. He, too, was to run the same Christian course with his slave, guided by the same principles, helped by the same hopes, and constrained by the same sanctions. A similar object soon produced a similarity of character; and a similarity of (Christian) character brought about

sympathy of feeling. In the rising tide of Christian fellowship the worst hardships of slavery melted away, even long before it was formally abolished. It became an anachronism, a relic of a vanished and gone-by condition of things.

V. AND AS IT WAS IN THE FIRST PERIOD OF THE GOSPEL, SO IT HAS BEEN SINCE. There have been periods when circumstances had brought about partial revivals of the spirit of slavery. But the working of the principles of the gospel have proved irreconcilable as ever with slavery, and has either brought it to an end or cast it out. Take, for example, the civil war in America.

Ver. 16.—*The brotherhood of all Christians.* Onesimus, before his conversion to the faith, was the servant of Philemon; and afterwards, though he did not cease to be his servant, yet he became something more, viz. his brother in Christ Jesus. We may learn from this—

I. THAT THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION DOES NOT TAKE AWAY THE DIFFERENCE OF RANKS AND CONDITIONS, NOR REGARD THEM AS UNLAWFUL. The Apostle Paul instructs masters how to behave towards servants, and servants towards masters (Eph. vi. 5, 9); governors how to conduct themselves towards the governed (Rom. xii. 8), and the governed towards their superiors; and thereby acknowledges each state as lawful.

II. YET THESE DIFFERENCES ARE ACCIDENTAL, AND CONSISTENT WITH AN ESSENTIAL EQUALITY OF ALL CHRISTIANS. The gospel considers all Christians (as they are in the sight of God) without reference to their rank and station, their wealth or poverty, and classes them on moral considerations alone. "The poor man hath the Word of God offered unto him, read unto him, and preached unto him as well as the rich; he hath the sacraments of God provided for him as well as for them that are of high place; he may pray unto God as freely, as comfortably, as cheerfully, as the great men of the earth; and he hath a gracious promise to be heard and respected as well as they. Though thou farest hardly and meanly at home, yet God hath prepared thee a feast, and biddeth thee to his table richly furnished and plentifully stored with all provision. Though thou do not get up and down in silks and velvets, and hast no gorgeous attire to put on, yet God hath provided thee a better garment—he giveth thee his own Son to put on, and clothe thee with his righteousness" (W. Attersoll).

III. The consideration that their servants and inferiors in station have an equal portion in Christ and in the means of salvation ought to be an instruction to those highly placed in this world to show MILDNESS AND CONSIDERATION, PATIENCE, AND EVEN MEEKNESS TO THEIR INFERIORS AND SERVANTS. Their advantages are great; they ought not to abuse those advantages by treating unfairly those who are committed to their charge (Jas. v. 3, 4).

IV. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE RICH MAN FOR THE POOR. The higher his rank above others, the more humble and unassuming should he be; for his *obligations* also are great: "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (Luke xii. 48). His authority, his influence, his example, must needs produce good or evil effects on others, and for these he will be held responsible in the judgment.

Ver. 19.—*Spiritual benefits the most valuable of all.* Since St. Paul had (as it appears) won to the embracing of the faith of Christ as well Philemon himself as Onesimus his slave, he rightly reminds him, as his first and most powerful argument, that Philemon owes himself and his very life (that is, the life of his soul) to him.

I. HE DOES NOT SUM UP THIS OBLIGATION. He leaves it to the conscience of Philemon to consider how much he was indebted. It was, perhaps, *incommensurable* with the favour he was asking. But it is clear that such an obligation must exceed every other. A man's *self* is more valuable than his *lands* or his *goods* (Job ii. 4). It is therefore a lifelong obligation that men are under to those who have been to them the instruments of great spiritual benefits, and one not capable of being fully discharged. So it is said, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!" (Isa. lii. 7; Rom. x. 15). St. Paul bears witness that the Galatians, whose spiritual father he was, regarded nothing as being too good or too costly to show their affection for him (iv. 14, 15); and he lays down in 1 Cor. ix. 11 that the spiritual benefits of which he had been the means were supreme in kind to any possible carnal recompense.

II. SPIRITUAL BENEFITS ARE INDEED THE GIFTS OF GOD AND THE EFFECTS OF HIS GRACE; but he uses the services of men, and particularly of his ministers, in the dispensing of them. "It is better to help our friends to recover lost grace than lost money" (Thomas Aquinas). And those who receive them rightly will be suitably grateful.

III. SPIRITUAL BENEFITS THE MOST VALUABLE, because the soul of man is his most precious *possession* (Mark viii. 36, 37). The life of the soul is impaired and at length wholly lost by sin; but is regained and strengthened by Divine grace. 1. *The soul is more noble than earth or heaven*; for of these the one is for its temporary habitation, the other for its eternal one. 2. *It bears the image of God*. It is like the piece of silver in the parable (Luke xv. 8), for which, when lost, such diligent search was made. The heavens were created with a word, but the redemption of the soul needed the incarnation of Christ, and his death upon the cross. 3. *Hence its value*, and the corresponding value of a service rendered to it—a value so great as not to be capable of being expressed (e.g.) in money.

IV. IT IS INCOMMENSURATE WITH TEMPORAL THINGS. So St. Paul does not give the sum of it. *The freedom of Onesimus was a service in the spiritual sphere*. It was a benefit to Onesimus himself; and, if he were employed as St. Paul proposed (ver. 13), in the service of the Church, might be the means of good to many other souls.

V. IT WAS A FITTING PLEDGE, therefore, of the gratitude of Philemon.

HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Vers. 1, 2.—*The sceptre of love*. "Fellow-labourer . . . fellow-soldier." These are terms expressive of the spirit of St. Paul. He was not only an ecclesiastic, speaking *ex-cathedra*, so as to have dominion over men's faith. He was a brother amongst brethren; he ruled by force of character and by depth of love; he addresses them in words which had not then degenerated into a formula: "Dearly beloved."

I. COMMON WORK. "Fellow-labourer." For Paul believed in work—in hard work. He had "journeys oft;" he returned to confirm the faith of the disciples. He worked in sorrow of brain and sweat of heart, and sometimes in sweat of brow.

II. COMMON CONFLICT. "Fellow-soldier." For all through the ages the Christian has a battle to fight—within himself, and with the world and the flesh and the devil. Men are sustained by the sight of men nobler than themselves risking life and health. In the Crimean War, when a young officer headed his troops, running by their side in the heat of the conflict, a private remarked, "There runs ten thousand a year!" Paul did not direct a campaign from afar; he did not do the dainty work, and leave others to hard fare and dungeons. He "fought a good fight," and in that fight he fell, to be crowned with honour hereafter. How inspiring, therefore, would such a man be to other apostles—"a fellow-soldier"!—W. M. S.

Ver. 4.—*Love's outcome in prayer*. "Making mention of thee always in my prayers." We may judge of the reality of our affection by the current of our thoughts. Do we find them tending towards some absent friends daily? Then we have evidence that ours is not the superficial love that can live only in the *presence* of its object. With the Christian thought turns to prayer. *There on the throne of the universe is One who can best befriend our dearest friends*.

I. THERE WAS BLESSEDNESS IN THE EXPERIENCE. "I thank my God, making mention," etc. It was not a prayer touched with sorrow for Philemon, Apphia, and Archippus, or with anxiety about their faith and character. It was the prayer of one who rejoiced that the Christ above could keep them from falling.

II. THERE WAS PURPOSE IN THE PRAYER. Paul remembers its subject-matter. When he heard of their love and faith towards the Lord Jesus, he prayed that their faith might not be merely personal or selfish, but that their religion might be, in the modern speech, "altruistic," which is "otherism" as opposed to "selfism." Paul prayed that the communication of their faith might be effectual, that the light might shine on others so as to guide *them*, that the fountain might flow into other hearts so as to refresh them.—W. M. S.

Vers. 9, 10.—*Love's motive-power.* "For love's sake I rather beseech thee . . . for my son Onesimus." Onesimus was a slave—one who in past times had been, as was natural, unmoved by any inspiration to good service—and was "unprofitable." He had been begotten again through the ministry of Paul, and now that he sends him back, he tells Philemon that the new Divine life in him will make him faithful, earnest, and "profitable."

I. TRUTH TRIUMPHS IN TIME. Slavery did not fall at once, nor was polygamy destroyed at once. Revolution would have been the cost of any such attempt. Paul left the cross to do its mighty work. The spirit of the gospel made slavery and polygamy alike impossible, because the cross destroys self, teaches us that we are not our own, and emancipates all who are oppressed through a love which gives itself for others instead of holding them in bondage.

II. LOVE IS THE SUPREME COMMAND. He will not enjoin. Men resist orders and commands. They find excuses for inaction, and their pride is hurt. But when love intreats, and when that love is like that of Paul the aged, and Paul a prisoner, and Paul to whom Philemon owed his own self (ver. 19), we need not wonder that love won the day; so Onesimus would be received back as a servant (a bond-servant), "but above a servant, a brother beloved."—W. M. S.

Vers. 19, 20.—*Personal obligation.* "Thine own self." This is more than all else. We can call nothing "our own" but "the self." We are not rich in what we have, but in what we are. All things, houses, estates, lands, are outside us. The self is all.

I. INDEBTEDNESS OF PHILEMON. Philemon owed his spiritual conversion, all the rich inheritance in the soul, to the ministry of Paul; and he delicately enough reminds him of this in an indirect form of speech, "Albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self." It is one of those touches which show what a true gentleman St. Paul was. There is more than claim of right to counsel him, viz. the modest reminder that, if need be, he would repay any loss that Philemon might have sustained through the detention by Paul of Onesimus.

II. EXPECTATION CONCERNING HIM. "Let me have joy of thee in the Lord." "Refresh me." What by? That which alone can rejoice the heart of a true father in the gospel, viz. Christ's own Spirit in Christ's disciples. The gospel was to be spread, not alone by eloquence or erudition, but by Christ's own religion alive and in action in all who confessed his Name.—W. M. S.

Ver. 22.—*Needful preparation.* "Prepare me . . . a lodging." Their prayers he hoped would open the door for him to come and see them. He knew that the golden key of prayer had opened many doors closed as fast as his own.

I. A LODGING SEEMS ALL HE EVER HAD. And not always had he that. A prison can scarcely be called a lodging—for, in one sense, when we lodge we have protection and rest, and are at liberty in our onward journey in life. This man gave up friends, country, home, for Christ's sake, and now he is completing his course and gives up dear life itself. Will he ever have this lodging? No; it is the time of his first imprisonment; he is treated as a malefactor, and we know what his end will be.

II. HIS NEXT LODGING-PLACE WILL BE THE GRAVE. But, in one sense, the idea that we associate with *this* resting-place was not fulfilled in his life. His death was probably one by the lions, or the executioner's axe, or the cross, which would leave even his poor body a prey to cruel hands.

III. HIS LODGING WAS TO GIVE PLACE TO HOME. Soon now, very soon, his words were fulfilled, "I have finished my course, . . . henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." Here the volume of his life, illustrated with so many etchings from his own hands of his pains, forsakements, temptations, and tribulations, now comes to a close. "Finis" is written upon all. Yet it is not *Vale, vale, in æternum vale!* that we inscribe upon his aims and hopes. No; it is the catacomb motto, *In pace*; for henceforth he enjoys the immortal reward, the great peace; he is at rest in God.—W. M. S.

Vers. 1—3.—*The address and salutation.* This strictly private letter, which has

been well called "the polite Epistle," carries upon the face of it a clear explanation of its contents.

I. THE WRITER OF THE EPISTLE. "Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ." He does not describe himself as an apostle, for there was no need here to assert his authority, but as a prisoner, to bespeak the sympathy of Philemon. He was not a prisoner for crime, but for the cause of Christ, and therefore "not ashamed of his chain." Several of his weightiest Epistles were written in prison, as if to show that "the Word of God was not bound." He associates with himself in the address, but with a separate title, the name of "Timothy our brother," who was known to the Colossians (Col. i. 1), and now in sympathy with himself respecting the object of this Epistle.

II. THE PERSONS TO WHOM THE EPISTLE WAS ADDRESSED. 1. "*Unto Philemon our beloved, and fellow-worker.*" (1) He was probably a native of Colossæ, for his slave Onesimus belonged to it (Col. iv. 9). (2) He was a convert of the apostle (ver. 19). (3) He was an evangelist. (4) He was a person of mark at Colossæ; for the Church gathers in his house; he is able to "refresh the hearts of the saints" both with temporal and spiritual mercies. (5) It is a sign of the apostle's humility that he places Philemon on an equality with himself as "a fellow-worker." Love bound the two servants of Christ closely together. 2. "*Apphia our sister.*" This name occurs in many Phrygian inscriptions. (1) She was probably the wife of Philemon. The apostle addresses her because, as the mistress of the household, her consent would be necessary to the reception of Onesimus on a new footing. (2) She was a true child of God; for she is addressed as "a sister" of the apostle. Therefore Philemon and Apphia were not unequally yoked together. (3) Mark how ready the apostle is to recognize the graces of the saints, and especially to acknowledge the true place of woman in her household. 3. "*Archippus our fellow-soldier.*" (1) He was probably the son of this worthy pair. (2) He was a minister of the gospel either at Colossæ or Laodicea (Col. iv. 7); for he is called "our fellow-soldier," as Epaphroditus is called "a soldier of Jesus Christ." The title suggests the idea of conflict and hard service for the truth, with a view to final victory. 4. "*The Church in thy house.*" This does not mean merely the private family of Philemon, though the object of the Epistle has the look of being a matter of strictly private concernment; but the assembly of Christians who met for worship under Philemon's roof. The restoration of Onesimus to his home under new relations would be a matter of profound interest and significance to the whole Church at Colossæ.

III. THE SALUTATION. "Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (see homiletical hints on Eph. i. 2).—T. C.

Vers. 4-7.—*Recognition of the Christian character and services of Philemon.* This is after the apostle's usual manner.

I. THE THANKSGIVING. "I thank my God always, making mention of thee in my prayers." 1. *Though it is not unlawful to praise men for their graces or virtues, God is first to be thanked as the Author of these dispositions.* "We rejoice [or, 'boast'] in God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 11). It is the privilege of the believer to speak of God as "my God," according to the tenure of the covenant: "I will be thy God." Therefore the apostle says, "Whose I am, and whom I serve" (Acts xxvii. 23). 2. *The occasion of his thanksgiving.* "Making mention of thee in my prayers." It mingled with his daily prayers. (1) Though a prisoner, the apostle had constant opportunities for secret devotion. (2) He was always mindful of others in his supplications. Many have no secret prayer; others pray only for themselves; the apostle prays for others. The saints had an individual place in the apostle's heart. (3) It is right to pray even for those who are the subjects of thanksgiving. The saints are not perfect, and therefore need to be prayed for, that they may enjoy a more abundant life in Christ Jesus (John x. 10).

II. THE CAUSE OR REASON OF THE THANKSGIVING. "Hearing of thy love and of the faith which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all the saints." 1. *A good report extols God's Name and recommends religion.* "By it the ancients obtained a good report" (Heb. xi. 3). 2. *Good men love to hear, as well as report, the praises of good men.* 3. *We ought to pray fervently for those who enjoy the greatest graces.* 4. *The graces of Philemon were faith in Christ and love to the saints.* (1) These graces, though distinguished from one another, never exist separately. "Faith worketh by

love," and never without it. Love proceeds from faith, even love to the saints (1 Thess. ii. 3). (2) The Object of faith is the Lord Jesus Christ; therefore it is called the faith of Jesus Christ (Rom. iii. 26). Faith, as an act of the understanding, sees Christ, and, as an act of will, trusts in him for eternal life. (3) The objects of love are the saints. Christ is to be loved in the saints, who are to be loved next to Christ. All the saints are to be loved, no matter what their character, disposition, or talents.

III. THE OBJECT OR PURPORT OF THE APOSTLE'S PRAYER. "That the fellowship of thy faith may become effectual in the knowledge of every good thing which is in you unto Christ." 1. *The fellowship referred to the kindly offices of sympathy and charity which were the offspring of Philemon's faith.* The apostle's prayers had in view the furtherance of Philemon's faith on its practical side. Faith is a bountiful grace, and is communicative in its very nature. 2. *The energetic operation of faith* (1) glorifies God; (2) refreshes the saints; (3) stops the mouths of malicious men; (4) and attests the true character of the saints even in the society of hypocrites. 3. *The drift of a practical faith is towards a fuller knowledge and appreciation of good in Christian men.* "The knowledge of the result and the reward of faith manifesting itself in deeds of love." Insight springs from obedience. 4. *The growth of faith in its upward tendency is "unto Christ,"* as its Goal and final Resting-place, depending as it does upon union with him, and tending to intensify the experience of that union.

IV. THE MOTIVE FOR THE APOSTLE'S THANKSGIVING. "For I had great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints have been refreshed by thee, brother." 1. *Whatever causes joy and consolation is just ground for thanksgiving.* "For what thanksgiving can we render again unto God for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God?" (1 Thess. iii. 9). Thanks ever be to that God who fills our hearts "with food and gladness." The Apostle John found his joy in learning that his children walked in truth (2 John 4). 2. *The proofs of Philemon's love to the saints.* (1) The apostle rejoices in a love which carries blessings to others rather than himself. (2) The saints ought to be refreshed in several ways. (a) By words of consolation, which we can easily extract from the promises of our Lord in the Word. (b) By our deeds of charity. So the apostle himself was "oft refreshed" by Onesiphorus during his long imprisonment. (c) By our prayers for the afflicted saints. (3) The motives that prompt to this compassionate dealing with the saints are (a) that we herein imitate God, "who comforteth those who are cast down" (2 Cor. i. 4); (b) we refresh the bowels of Christ himself; (c) God will not forget our labour of love (1 Thess. i. 3).—T. C.

Vers. 8-11.—*Appeal by entreaty rather than command.* The apostle here enters on the main subject of his letter, and introduces it with a singular mixture of courtesy, affection, and authority.

I. IT IS SOMETIMES WISE TO FOREGO THE EXERCISE OF AUTHORITY. "Wherefore, though I have all boldness in Christ to enjoin thee that which is befitting, yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee." 1. *Ministers possess authority.* They are required to speak with authority. "Charge them that are rich that they be not high-minded." 2. *Their authority is not in their own name, but in that of Christ.* "I have all boldness in Christ." They are but servants in the Church, as Moses was (Heb. iii. 5); "not having dominion over our faith, but helpers of our joy" (2 Cor. i. 24); for it is the authority of ambassadors (2 Cor. v. 20). 3. *There are limits to this authority.* "To enjoin thee that which is befitting." This follows from the fact that Christ gives the command. He can only command that which is befitting. Thus it is right for a believer to do even more than strict law would demand, for he must do what reason and propriety dictate.

II. IT IS THE DELIGHT AS WELL AS THE WISDOM OF MINISTERS TO USE ENTREATY RATHER THAN COMMAND. 1. *Ministers often wisely forego their right in prosecuting their Master's work.* Christians likewise find it needful to forego the use of things lawful, because their use would be inexpedient. They must not "abuse their liberty" or "hinder the gospel" (1 Cor. ix. 12, 18). 2. *Love is the principal motive to prompt to this action.* "Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee." Not the love of the apostle to Philemon, nor the love of Philemon to him, but love absolutely as a principle held in highest regard by all Christians. It is love that "seeketh not her own." 3. *An*

entreaty derives added weight from the age and sufferings of him who offers it. "Being such a one as Paul the aged, and now a prisoner also of Jesus Christ." (1) Reverence is due to age. It is "a crown of glory when it is found in the way of righteousness." The apostle was not now old, as the years of a life are reckoned, but he bore the signs of age in exhaustion and weariness and cares. (2) Ministers are to be regarded with peculiar respect and sympathy on account of their afflictions. The apostle was now a prisoner at Rome for the sake of Christ—"an ambassador in bonds."

III. THE OBJECT OF THE APOSTLE'S ENTREATY. "I beseech thee for my child whom I have begotten in my bonds, Onesimus." 1. *Onesimus was the runaway slave of Philemon of Colossæ*, who had made his way to Rome, and come into contact with the apostle during his imprisonment. 2. *He was a convert of the apostle.* (1) The apostle was the instrument of his conversion at Rome. (2) Ministers ought to use private and casual opportunities of doing good to others. (3) Though the apostle was a prisoner, the Word of God was not bound. (4) God often sweetens the afflictions of his ministers by special favours. 3. *His conversion became manifest by his better life.* "Who was aforetime unprofitable to thee, but now is profitable to thee and to me." (1) Good men may have bad servants. This Onesimus had been unprofitable, not only as a pilferer, but as an idler. The example of his godly master and mistress had no influence upon his conduct. (2) Conversion always results in a change of social character. It makes people conscientious in the discharge of all duties incident to their calling. Onesimus was henceforth "profitable" both to Philemon and the apostle. (a) He was profitable to the apostle. Religious servants are the most profitable. Onesimus gave new joy to the apostle by his conversion, while he waited on him, no doubt, in the ministry of private service and kindness. It is not enough that a sinner cease to do evil; he must learn to do well. We see in Onesimus the practical side of the apostle's counsel, "Let him that stole steal no more, but let him rather work with his hands that which is good" (Eph. iv. 28). (b) He was profitable to Philemon, in so far as he, in Philemon's stead, did that service to the apostle which his master would have readily done if it had been in his power. He would be yet more profitable to his master in the spirit and conditions of his new service, on his return back to Colossæ.—T. C.

Vers. 12-16.—*The motives that prompted the apostle to send back Onesimus to his master.* 1. *HE DID SEND HIM BACK.* "Whom I have sent back to thee in his own person, that is, my very heart." 1. *Onesimus did not return of his own accord.* He might, perhaps, have had some not unnatural misgivings as to the character of the reception he would meet with as a returned slave who had acted a dishonest part, and might have been ashamed besides to appear again in a community where his misdeeds had been made known. 2. *The apostle recognized Philemon's right to the restored services of his fugitive slave.* The gospel does not abolish civil rights. The conversion of Onesimus did not secure his manumission. Yet the gospel planted principles in society which in due time abolished slavery everywhere. "Wast thou called being a bond-servant? care not for it: but if thou canst become free, use it rather" (1 Cor. vii. 21). 3. *He did not even wait till he had received an answer from Philemon as to the terms in which Onesimus would be received back into the Colossian household.* He sent Onesimus at once in charge of his two letters, namely, that to the Colossian saints and that to Philemon himself. 4. *Yet the apostle acted in the whole matter with the deepest affection for the poor bond-servant.* He speaks of him as "his own heart." What account Christianity makes of the meanest classes of society!

II. THE APOSTLE'S EXPLANATION OF HIS CONDUCT AND MOTIVES IN THE WHOLE TRANSACTION. 1. *His first feeling was to retain Onesimus about his person to do him the service that Philemon himself would have gladly done.* He had now become profitable, according to the happy significance of his name. But it was not for the apostle to interfere with another man's servant. 2. *The true cause of his sending Onesimus was that he would do nothing without the consent of his master.* "But without thy mind would I do nothing." But the motive that prompted this determination was that "thy goodness should not be as of necessity, but of free will." If the apostle had kept Onesimus for the sake of the benefit to be derived from his personal ministrations, the whole transaction would have worn a semblance of constraint. We have no right to extort benefits from our friends against their will. 3. *The providential*

aspect of the matter. "For perhaps he was therefore parted from thee for a season, that thou shouldest have him for ever." (1) Nothing in this statement extenuates the misdeeds of Onesimus, which God overruled for good. (2) The acts of the meanest individual in society are included in the sphere of Divine providence. (3) God makes up for the losses of his saints in his own time and way. Philemon has his once unfaithful servant restored to him on an entirely new footing of advantage. (4) The restoration of the fugitive slave is to an eternal relationship. The earthly tie is sundered by death, but grace gives an eternity to the holy relationships of earth. 4. *The new relation established between master and servant.* "Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, most of all by me, but more than most of all by thee, in the flesh and in the Lord." The apostle does not say, "not a servant," but "not as a servant;" for grace did not abrogate the old tie of master and servant. (1) The brotherhood of saints is common to all the relationships of life. Philemon and Onesimus are now brethren beloved. (2) Pious servants are to be more regarded, as they are more faithful, than servants without religion. (3) There are none dearer to ministers than their converts. (4) There was a double obligation to duty on Philemon's part corresponding to the double tie—that of the flesh and that of the Spirit—by which he was now connected with Onesimus.—T. C.

Ver. 17.—*The plea of Christian fellowship.* The apostle here directly puts his request, "If then thou countest me a partner, receive him as myself." He regards Philemon as a partner in faith and love and life. It is a recurrence to an old argument, "If there be any fellowship of the Spirit, . . . fulfil ye my joy."

I. THE FELLOWSHIP OF BELIEVERS. *It subsists in the fellowship with the Father and the Son, and derives all its force therefrom.* (1 John i. 3.) That fellowship implies that all saints have a common Father (Eph. iv. 6), a common elder Brother (Heb. ii. 11), a common inheritance (Eph. ii. 19; Rev. i. 9), a common grace (Phil. i. 7), a common suffering (1 Cor. xii. 26; Heb. x. 33, 34). The Holy Spirit is the Author and the Power of this fellowship (2 Cor. xiii. 13), as love is the "bond of perfection" (Col. iii. 14). Thus believers become of "one heart and one soul."

II. THE PLEA FOUNDED UPON THIS FELLOWSHIP. "Receive him as myself." 1. *It is a genuine plea;* for the apostle elsewhere says, "If there be any fellowship of the Spirit . . . look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Phil. ii. 4). "Love seeketh not her own." 2. *Onesimus was now a partner as well as the apostle.* Therefore, as the old Puritan says, "Love me, love my partner: one partner receives another, even for a partner's sake." If Philemon loves Christ in the apostle, why not in Onesimus? "Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of these little ones, ye have done it unto me" (Matt. xxv. 40). We are to love Christ in the meanest of his servants.—T. C.

Vers. 18, 19.—*The apostle's frank acceptance of pecuniary responsibility for Onesimus.* The injured master might plead that it was enough for him to forbear punishing his unfaithful servant, but the injuries he had received put it out of his power to replace him in his household.

I. THERE IS HERE AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE WRONG DONE BY THE NOW PENITENT SLAVE. "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that to mine account." It is evident that Onesimus had frankly confessed his misdeeds to the apostle. 1. *Mark the mild language in which the apostle describes them.* He does not say that Onesimus robbed his master, as he did not wish either to hurt the feelings of the slave or to irritate the feelings of the master; but simply speaks of a wrong done, of a possible debt incurred. If a sinner is penitent, why should his old sins or follies be thrown in his teeth? 2. *Restitution in case of civil injury is a first thing.* It is one of the most practical proofs of repentance.

II. THERE IS A RESPONSIBILITY ASSUMED FOR THE DEBT OF ONESIMUS. "Put that to mine account: I Paul write it with mine own hand, I will repay it." The apostle here puts his name, as it were, at the foot of the bond. 1. *It was an act of self-sacrificing consideration for Onesimus,* as if the apostle would remove every possible obstacle to the restoration of the penitent slave to his Colossian home. 2. *Yet it is so put as to imply that Philemon would hardly exact the debt.*

III. THERE IS THE STATEMENT OF A MUCH LARGER COUNTER-CLAIM. "Not to say to thee that thou owest to me even thine own self besides." 1. *It was a true claim.* The apostle had been the instrument of Philemon's conversion. 2. *It was an overpowering claim.* The blessing that accrues to a man from his conversion cannot be weighed in the balance against all a man's property. 3. *There ought to be mercy in the exaction of debts.* This is implied in the nature of the apostle's appeal. Onesimus was utterly unable to make restitution, and, if the apostle became his surety, it was with an implied wish that Philemon would take a liberal view of his duty in the matter.—T. C.

Ver. 20.—*A plea for personal consideration.* The apostle now becomes more personal in his urgency. "Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my heart in Christ."

I. CHRISTIANS OUGHT TO AIM AT THE SPIRITUAL GRATIFICATION OF EACH OTHER. It is not well to make the hearts of the righteous sad (Ezek. xiii. 22). The apostle had care and anxiety and sadness enough to depress him, and it was natural he should seek some fresh joy from the obedience of his disciples.

II. THE OBEDIENCE OF CHRISTIANS IS A GREAT SOURCE OF REFRESHING TO MINISTERS. The ready obedience of Philemon would revive the drooping spirit of the apostle, and inspire him with fresh vigour. As the refreshing was to be "in the Lord" as the aim of all a Christian's actions, so we see how constantly the apostle rejoiced and gloried in the Lord, and commended his example to his converts and to Christians generally.—T. C.

Vers. 21, 22.—*The apostle's concluding appeal.* He now glides insensibly into the language of authority, which all along he had a right to assume. "Having confidence in thine obedience, I write unto thee, knowing that thou wilt do even beyond what I say."

I. THE MOST WILLING MAY BE FAIRLY URGED TO THE COURSE OF DUTY. The apostle assures Philemon that he does not doubt his obedience, yet he thinks it necessary to stir up his pure mind to a remembrance of his obligations. 1. *An obedient people make zealous ministers.* 2. *A good conscience ensures confidence in the wise and zealous conduct of life.* "Credit and a good conscience are shipped both in one bottom." 3. *A good heart entitles us to expect a liberal construction of the extent of our duty.* The apostle seems here to hint that Philemon might possibly manumit his slave. That the apostle had not demanded; yet it was within the possible scope of Philemon's liberal understanding of his duty to Onesimus.

II. THE APOSTLE DESPRAKS, ON HIS APPROACHING VISIT TO COLOSSE, A FAVOURABLE RECEPTION TO ONESIMUS. "But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I hope that through your prayers I shall be granted to you." 1. *The presence of the apostle at Colosse would enable him to see that his expectations had not been disappointed.* A Puritan writer says, "Who would not willingly receive Onesimus, coming as Paul's harbinger, to provide him lodging?" 2. *The most eminent servants of God need the prayers of the humblest in his Church.* (1) Because they are exposed to many dangers and temptations. (2) Because they have a responsible charge in God's kingdom. (3) Because their liberty to preach the gospel is often threatened, if not temporarily destroyed, by wicked men. (4) The apostle believed in the efficacy of prayer. The prayers of the Colossian household would or might unlock his prison-doors. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas. v. 16).—T. C.

Vers. 23—25.—*Salutations and prayer.* I. SALUTATIONS. These are the expressions of Christian sympathy and kindness. 1. *They are the salutations of the apostle's fellow-prisoner.* "There salute thee Epaphras my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus." (1) Epaphras was a Colossian evangelist (Col. i. 7; iv. 12). (2) He was imprisoned at Rome in the immediate society of the apostle. (a) This was an alleviation to both prisoners, on account of their common faith, their common hopes, and their common interests. Epaphras, as probably the younger man, would be very helpful to the apostle. (b) The cause of the imprisonment in both cases was "in Christ Jesus." They suffered for the preaching of his gospel. 2. *They are the salutations of the apostle's fellow-labourers.* "Marcus" (Acts xii. 12), once temporarily estranged from

the apostle, but now at his side; "Aristarchus" (Acts xix. 29, 30; Col. iv. 10); "Demas," whose apostasy was yet future (2 Tim. iv. 10); "Luke," the beloved physician and evangelist (Col. iv. 14). The apostle was happily circumstanced, even as a prisoner, through the constant or occasional society of these men.

II. PRAYER. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit." It is curious to find no allusion to God the Father in this prayer. If Christ is not God, how can we account for such a prayer? It is a simple but beautiful prayer addressed to the whole Philemon household.—T. C.

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